













# A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE



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# CONTENTS

CHAP.	PAGE
INTRODUCTION . . . . .	xix <sup>1</sup>
I CAN WE ALTER THE FUTURE? . . . . .	I
<p>1. To live happily in the present, we must believe firmly in the future. Our age has lost all the old beliefs and has acquired no new one. What can a reasonable man do?</p> <p>2. How our intellectual efficiency is injured by our not having a consistent philosophy of life. How this involves a satisfactory view of the future. How society prevents individuals from being consistent. How our governments for all their sanity are so inconsistent that farmers have to pray for bad weather that they may live.</p> <p>3. Why worry about the future, since we cannot control or alter it? How four hundred boys sat down to prepare themselves for life though one hundred were to die within seven years. If their parents had known, could it have made any difference? Can we do nothing for our sons, although we know?</p> <p>4. There is a true Determinism and a false Determinism, and in what they differ. A few words on Determinism and the American Constitution, Baldwin, Hitler and Hoover.</p> <p>5. Is there any use in trying to catch a train, since it may be determined that we shall miss it? Apply the answer you give to this question to the whole question of "influencing" the future, and you will be able to distinguish for practical purposes between true and false Determinism. How we must be sure that we are not working towards a future that can never be.</p> <p>6. Brains will not shape the future; nor will our individual desires. We may be sure that the future will not please us, but then we will not have to live in it. This book does not describe the future that its author would create were he god; but rather the future that seems probable in the light of the unalterable laws which all life obeys.</p>	
II THE UNALTERABLE LAWS . . . . .	18
<p>7. Man is an animal: his past, present and future are controlled by the same inexorable laws that control other animals. Mussolini and the amoeba in his glass of water had the same ancestor; which branch of the family is more secure to-day? How man's future is</p>	

## CONTENTS

### CHAP.

### PAGE

quite uncertain and depends on his being able to obey the inexorable laws of evolution.

8. We cannot freely choose between Dictatorship and Democracy, Communism or Fascism, any more than an animal can choose between the solitary and the social habit. The proper nature of instinct and reason ; both mere tools ground out by evolution, and neither the controllers of evolution.

9. Is a man any more advanced than an ant, or an eagle ? Man has developed reason as a tool in the struggle for survival, but so far he has not used it as satisfactorily as some animals have used other tools. The sex experience of phylloxera compared with man's intellectual experience in this particular. How phylloxera solves the problem of over-population far better than Malthus or Mussolini.

10. The chief value of man's reason as a tool in the struggle for existence is that it enables him to alter the minor rules of the game. But it is a two-edged tool, dangerous in that it helps man to perpetuate his mistakes. Can reason and the social habit be used successfully by the same animal ? Will the possession of both turn out to be so serious a fault that man will have no future at all ?

### III REASON AND THE SOCIAL HABIT . . . . . 37

11. The theory that reason and the social habit can be used together fully is called Democracy. Is Democracy sound when judged in accordance with the inexorable laws of evolution ? The social habit is not a thing which we form, but a thing which forms us ; will the social habit leave us the free use of our reasons ? We can gain a very clear idea of what the social habit will do to mankind by considering what it has done to other animals which have experienced its effects for much longer than mankind.

12. Ants have vastly more experience of the social habit than man and they have succeeded far better than man in solving some fundamental problems. This is because it is the social habit which solves them. Would the ant be a better animal if it had reason to help it ? Man with reason has not done so well as the ant without. Examples of the success of bees and wasps with problems that man has so far bungled. The social habit sets up a standard of values very different from that by which we judge a man. When we are more experienced in the social habit shall we begin to think less of some of the qualities in which we glory ?

13. What is the effect of the social habit on the individual ? It involves the limiting of the individual's versatility by turning it into a specialist. The vast revolution that comes from division of labour when new units arise can be studied at several epochs of life's history. How division of labour brings about physical changes and modifications in the individual. How with man these

# CONTENTS

## CHAP.

## PAGE

changes are only concerned with sexual division of labour, but with animals that have been subjected longer to the social habit there are other kinds of physical change and modification to be observed. Will not man also experience these?

14. The ant community not needing all its members to have sexual activity limits the possession of sexual capacity to the few. Will not man come to this also? We can make men love death by patriotic propaganda, and we shall be able by the same means to make them eschew sex. With man, the rational animal, this will be achieved rapidly by scientific means, instead of our waiting millions of years for blind evolution to achieve the same result.

15. What the ant community has done to sex may well be done in man to the use of reason, once we are more fully dominated by the social habit. Reason is simply a tool which must be used in accordance with the laws governing the struggle for existence. It will be discarded if discarding it gives the community greater survival value. We should not forget that polymorphism in the social insects is the result of social division of labour. Examples of this: the neuter worker and the military ant. What ants do with old soldiers and what man can learn from this. The universal law that the social habit does not allow individuals to have potentialities or desires that they are not going to use.

16. How these facts about the social habit which we learn from the study of experienced social animals throw a new light on the future of human history. Does this mean the permanent eclipse of individualism? It certainly means the destruction of all individual activity harmful to the social unit. How false use of reason has led to a fantastic relationship between man and nature. Quotations from a reliable source showing the incredible folly of our system as far as our food supply is concerned; a folly which will doom all communities which do not escape from it to ultimate extinction. How the best way to find a clue to the future is to forget all political party names, all leaders and dictators and to concentrate on the way in which man, an animal, is securing food for himself. Will reason put an end to this folly, or some blinder power? And if the latter, what power? That is the real problem of human evolution for the next fifty years.

## IV IS IT WAR? . . . . .

72

17. What is peace? The peaceful farmer in the Mississippi valley. How he prays for bad weather. How he supports on his shoulders the civilization of the town. Where are the men to whom he pays mortgage interest? The farmer's joy is to pay for new religions in Los Angeles. Suppose in some other community the farmer had to pay no money charges, how would his chances for survival compare with those of the Mississippi man? A com-



## CONTENTS

parison between the way the American farmer's money goes and the way the Russian farmer's money goes. What does this comparison mean in terms of the inexorable laws of evolution?

18. Our peace is built on the grievances of the country against the town. The two nations to which every man belongs. The nation of his companions and the nation which is a business concern. How the latter persuades him to die for it in the name of the former. Why is England so lovely? The three things which contributed to that loveliness are all coming to an end. The unseen hand that takes a portion of every worker's labour, and how the consequences of this are destroying the system which uses it. The realization by the worker that he is the slave of the man who owns the tools with which he works. The growing reluctance of black, brown and yellow men to take our beads, Bibles and rum at our own valuation.

19.

### PROPHECY NO. I

IF WAR COMES IT WILL BE FOUGHT BY ARMIES UNABLE TO PROTECT CIVILIAN POPULATIONS, AGAINST WHICH, FROM THE VERY FIRST MOMENT, ALL EFFORTS OF THE ATTACKERS WILL BE AIMED. IT WILL BE SHORT AND INVOLVE INEVITABLY THE DESTRUCTION OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF BOTH VICTORS AND VANQUISHED, IF THEY CAN BE SHOWN EITHER TO HAVE PROMOTED IT, OR TO HAVE BEEN CRIMINALLY NEGLIGENT IN NOT PREVENTING IT.

A brief picture of the war as it will affect the inhabitants of a town like London, drawn from unimpeachable official documents. How it is possible to exaggerate the number likely to be burned, bombed or gassed to death, but scarcely the number who will be terrified that such will be their fate. The exact nature of the rain of poison expected to fall on London and the methods suggested for avoiding the inevitable.

20. How we are to keep under cover in the Next War. Home Office suggestions for preparing a gas-proof room. Portrait of four million Londoners trekking for the open country. Portrait of business as usual in gas-proof oilskins. Portrait of the Fire Brigade going about its job. Expected effect of the new tools of war on England's food supply. Precautions necessary on merchant ships. Probable attitude of neutrals to the risks of importing food for us.

The net result :

### PROPHECY NO. II

THERE WILL BE NO WAR IN WESTERN EUROPE FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS. (From 1935.)

21. There will be no war because the evolution of tools has made it impossible to protect the civilian population. This does not mean that governments have become

## CONTENTS

### CHAP.

### PAGE

sensible, but that they have so much more to fear that they will struggle to avoid their own destruction. Moreover, the evolution of tools has brought new loyalties to displace the old ones. In every country there is a powerful opposition to the government which will thwart every effort to carry on war. This is why France did not prevent Germany from re-arming. The alternative to Hitler's Germany is a Communist Germany. The International of Capitalism is very real and desperately anxious to avoid war. In 1914 there were rival capitalisms hoping for gain from their competitors, now there is united capitalism that knows no national borders, however much it may be exploiting nationalism in certain countries. Thus capitalism will keep the peace as long as it can.

22. But our analysis of the evolution of human tools leads on to our

#### PROPHECY NO. III

##### EVENTUALLY WAR IS INEVITABLE

Three nations are committed under their present governments to policies which must lead to economic disaster. When bankruptcy stares them in the face they will take the gambler's chance of war. Thus we come to

#### PROPHECY NO. IV

##### THE NEXT WAR WILL BEGIN AS A HOLY WAR BETWEEN GERMANY AND JAPAN ON THE ONE SIDE AND RUSSIA ON THE OTHER

Without Germany Japan can never beat Russia and if Germany were to repeat 1914 in the West she would be faced with the same alliance of opponents. Germany hopes to keep Britain and France neutral while she leads a crusade against Russia. Already a certain body of public opinion in England shows itself favourable to such a course. But Germany has the unceasing opposition of organized labour, and of Jews; while America will not be pleased with a policy which will leave Japan supreme on the Pacific. What will the democracies do when they have to choose between left and right dictatorships. The historic importance of the Franco-Soviet pact.

### V LEFT OR RIGHT? . . . . . 120

23. Can the democratic form persist? Is it well organized from the point of view of animal survival?

#### PROPHECY NO. V

##### DEMOCRACY WILL BE DEAD BY 1950

Democracy doomed by the evolution of human tools. How new tools destroyed feudalism, and built our town civilization. How newer tools still destroyed the freedom of the early town and brought factory tyranny. How yet newer tools displaced cheap labour with technicians. How all these changes had their political forms which

## CONTENTS

lasted until the evolution of tools made them obsolete. How mass production weakened the proletariat and increased the power of the bourgeoisie. How the new balance of classes broke down the democratic compromise and led on to fascism. How the evolution of tools has produced a revolutionary situation by destroying the validity of all the old ways.

24. What will happen to the great countries in the next few years?

### PROPHECY NO. VI

GERMANY WILL KEEP OUT OF WAR AS LONG AS POSSIBLE. BUT WILL FINALLY ATTACK RUSSIA UNLESS CHECKED BY ENGLAND AND FRANCE, IN WHICH CASE SHE WILL BECOME THE NEXT GREAT COMMUNIST STATE.

Why Hitler? Why the reader would be a Nazi were he a German. Why Germany is inevitably going bankrupt. Whence will come the opposition to Hitler? The incompatible elements within the Nazi policy. How Germany will try to seduce England from France. The significance of the Popular Front. Will democracy defeat reaction in France? Can British opinion be made pro-German? How France will be herself again and lead European progressive opinion.

### PROPHECY NO. VII

THE ONLY REPLY TO THE MENACE OF DICTATORSHIPS OF THE RIGHT IS THE POPULAR FRONT. ITS SUCCESS IN FRANCE WILL GIVE FRANCE THE MORAL LEADERSHIP OF THE WORLD FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS AND MAY CHECK THE WARLIKE AIMS OF GERMANY IN A WAY THAT THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS COULD NEVER DO.

There are no Pyrenees. How all Europe is dividing into two groups, the right and the left.

### PROPHECY NO. VIII

BRITAIN, FRANCE AND SPAIN IN ALLIANCE WITH RUSSIA AND SMALLER SO-CALLED NEUTRAL NATIONS WILL OPPOSE THE DESTROYERS OF DEMOCRACY ON THE RIGHT.

How we have awakened to see that the real danger to democratic institutions is from the right and not from the left. How Italy has helped us all by her pathetic adventure into eighteenth-century imperialism. How this has shown the true course of evolution that must be followed by the League of Nations. Why Italy cannot go communist at present.

25. What of England? What the evolution of tools has done to her traditional position. She is no longer God's chosen people, because her natural resources are no longer favourable. How England is dependent on the Continent for her political evolution. How England must go fascist or communistic according as the

# CONTENTS

CHAP.

PAGE

right or left triumphs there. What has been the chief strength of British capitalists. Why is England's conservative "National" government so unpatriotic? How the evolution of tools has taken the courage out of her traditionalists. Why every country is allowed to insult her. No mysterious racial taint has made her degenerate, the logical laws of evolution have given her over to Mr. Facing-both-ways.

## PROPHECY NO. IX

THE RELATIVE SUCCESS OF THE DEMOCRATIC COMPROMISE IN ENGLAND WILL PREVENT A STRONG LEAD IN ANY DIRECTION. THE INCOMPATIBLE AIMS OF CAPITALIST DEMOCRACY WILL KEEP HER FROM TAKING THE MORAL LEAD AGAINST THE DICTATORSHIPS OF THE RIGHT BUT THE PRESSURE OF HER PACIFIC WORKER CLASS AND WHAT IS LEFT OF MIDDLE-CLASS LIBERAL TRADITION WILL PREVENT ANY ALLIANCE WITH GERMANY AGAINST RUSSIA. WHILE WE HAVE A NATIONAL GOVERNMENT ANY NATION WILL BE ABLE TO DO WHATEVER IT LIKES WITHOUT PAYING ATTENTION TO US.

26. The relative unimportance of the U.S.A. in spite of its wealth and natural strength. How American institutions have suffered from the too good fortune enjoyed by its people. There has not been a hard enough struggle for survival to create stable institutions capable of taking the strain when bad times come. In consequence Americans have not accepted the cultural consequences of the tools they have invented. This is leading to an inevitable breakdown and :

## PROPHECY NO. X

AMERICA WILL FORGET ALL BUT THE CATCHWORDS OF DEMOCRACY AND WILL ENTER INTO A RUTHLESS PERIOD OF FASCISM.

The reasons why America will go fascist. The disgruntled middle class in an age of inopportunity. Race feeling. Emotional instability. Lack of a civil service. Lack of an organized and intelligent labour movement. If America isolates herself from the rest of the world's troubles it means that she isolates herself from the stream of evolution.

27. A brief summary of the way in which our Age of Stupidity is to be liquidated.

## VI THE STATE BECOMES SUPER-BIOLOGIST . . . 158

28. We turn to a period when human stupidity ceases to be the deciding factor in human affairs. How a student of history in A.D. 2000 will look back on our century and especially the next fifty years. How he will thank his stars that he was not alive in 1940.

## CONTENTS

### 29. PROPHECY NO. XI

BY A.D. 2000 EVERY COMMUNITY WILL HAVE ADOPTED A PLANNED BIRTH-RATE AND POPULATION WILL BE KEPT AT A FIXED LEVEL BY STATE-CONTROLLED CONTRACEPTION, ABORTION AND STERILIZATION.

What is the Population Problem? The strange muddles that exist in the minds of conservatives and socialists alike over it. The argument that the lower orders should not breed. The argument that we are being swamped by huge birth-rates among the lower orders, and that this is bad for "us". The socialist resenting this is apt to believe that neo-malthusianism is a capitalist dodge. How it is perfectly clear that only capitalism makes it hard to support an increasing population. But this does not mean that without capitalism there need be no end to the number of people that can be conveniently born. Where are their garages to go? What is the best size of population that all may enjoy a full life? It is a function of the natural resources and power available in a given locality and that will be the criterion upon which human communities will base the size of their carefully controlled populations. None of the present reasons for desiring a high or a low birth-rate will be valid once capitalist rivalry is a thing of the past, and in their place will come considerations of comfort and happiness, which at present are neglected.

### 30. PROPHECY NO. XII

ENGLAND WILL HAVE A POPULATION ONE-TENTH OF ITS PRESENT SIZE.

This will not be because England is effete, but because English people will at last be able to arrange to enjoy England. England, not having valuable raw materials needed by other parts of the world, will cease to be a big trading nation and become once more a garden and a museum.

### 31. PROPHECY NO. XIII

LARGE TRACTS OF AMERICA WILL GO BACK TO THE PRIMEVAL WILDERNESS.

How capitalism in America has gutted a continent. How the natural resources are giving out so that soon America will settle down to be a series of busy oases in the midst of huge national parks. There is no need to cultivate so much of America and the new state of affairs will be conducive of great happiness since the evolution of human tools has eliminated the nightmare of distance and isolation. How our grandchildren will be disgusted at our attitude towards the problems of producing human beings. How the human reverence for chance plays havoc with reasonable begetting.

32. The state having controlled the size of its population, what sort of individuals will there be? To-day we are conscious of racial differences and in some cases these

# CONTENTS

CHAP.

PAGE

differences have become the chief foundations of national policies. What will happen to these problems when the Age of Stupidity is liquidated?

## PROPHECY NO. XIV

BY A.D. 4000 RACE PROBLEMS WILL ALL BE SOLVED.  
THERE WILL BE ONE RACE IN THE WORLD, WITH A  
PALE COFFEE-COLOURED SKIN, MONGOLOID EYES,  
RATHER SHORTER THAN THE AVERAGE ENGLISHMAN  
TO-DAY.

This prophecy is perfectly safe because it rests on the obvious results of the way in which human tools are evolving. Why race prejudice exists. The economic basis of all race problems. What does Hitler mean by Aryan supremacy? Is Hitler an Aryan? Is anybody an Aryan? Why Mr. Paul Robeson is an Aryan. A few words to the man who does not want his daughter to marry a Negro. The economic interpretation of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion. Why has the Jew always been hated and ill-treated? The Jew's place in history. Why the Jew has always been concerned in the destruction of the economic *status quo*. The Jew and feudalism. The Jew and chain stores. White and Black in Georgia, British and French Africa. Why is the race question different in each of these three? A few words about the true-born Englishman. How we Anglo-Saxons come of a bleached negroid stock. What the Jews have done to stage-struck Gentiles. What the Japanese have done to Californians. Further words of comfort to the man who does not want his daughter to marry a Negro.

## VII EVERYDAY LIFE IN 1960 . . . . . 194

33. Some of our everyday appliances that did not exist thirty-five years ago. Some very new words—Ford, birth control, cinema, broadcasting, endocrine, vitamin, aluminium. What will the next twenty-five years bring?

34.

## PROPHECY NO. XV

BY 1960 WORK WILL BE LIMITED TO THREE HOURS  
A DAY.

The Age of Stupidity and fixed ideas. Argument in favour of keeping childbirth painful. No more absurd than our attitude to work as a virtue. How we enslave ourselves to unnecessary labour.

35. Why does a piece of soap cost sixpence? Do we need to be told to keep clean? Why not sell water as soap is sold? The relative merits of Jones's, Smith's and Robinson's water as advertised. We sacrifice men's lives to telling us that we want what we know we want, and pay them handsomely into the bargain. What would happen if all this energy was saved and used for a really useful purpose? As between a community busy with advertising soap and another busy with strengthening itself as a social unit, which will win the struggle for existence?

## CONTENTS

36. How we buy a motor-car. Why not a consumers' soviet with an expert to buy the car each man needs? Some of the things we pay for every time we buy a car. Compare this with a community whose members when they buy a car only pay for the car itself.

37. We shall have to curtail the amount of work spent in distributing goods by hypnotism; can we use the man power saved to produce more and more new goods? No; production also will need less and less labour. A few statistics showing how labour is being needed less and less in manufacture. Why then do we go on working some people eight hours and more a day and keeping others unemployed altogether? What would be the effect of a community organizing its labour to save three days' work a week for all, and using the saved time to make itself stronger in the struggle for existence? The dangers of a future with twenty-one hours a day of leisure.

38. What shall we do with the new leisure? Read Browning?

### PROPHECY NO. XVI

THERE WILL BE COMPULSORY EDUCATION FOR ALL  
UNTIL TWENTY-ONE.

What will this new education be? It will be like all state-controlled education, a conditioning of the individual in the interests of the state. Why the state is interested in education. A frank statement of aims by a Prussian. How Germany, Italy and Russia to-day have carried the tradition of state education a few steps farther. The survival value of a cocksure community. Education as a means to produce cocksureness. The fallacy of searching for truth free of propaganda in the world as it is. Education by coloured shirts. Are we fair to our own children in keeping them out of shirts? Would they not die more happily if given the spiritual rum of mass hysteria? Gloomy outlook for followers of John Stuart Mill.

39. Material comfort could be vastly increased immediately but for the profit motive. The story of razor blades. This will change rapidly.

### PROPHECY NO. XVII

POWER WILL BE SUPPLIED TO ALL ON THE SAME TERMS  
AS WATER AND DRAINAGE TO-DAY.

The unfortunate doom of so-called Public Utility Companies. New forms of power on the verge of discovery.

### 40. PROPHECY NO. XVIII

ABUNDANT NEW RAW MATERIALS WILL MAKE FOOD,  
CLOTHING AND OTHER NECESSITIES UNIVERSALLY  
OBTAINABLE.

Something that a cow can do better than a man. Towards a day when nothing will cost anything.

41. Brief summary of how the stage will be set for the future of human relationships.

# CONTENTS

CHAP.	PAGE
VIII	224

## WHITHER HUMAN NATURE?

42. A few more words about the penguin's wing. How the evolution of human tools influences the habits of man, and not only his habits but his morals, his science and his philosophy.

### 43. PROPHECY NO. XIX

BY 1975 PARENTS WILL HAVE CEASED TO BRING UP  
THEIR CHILDREN IN FAMILY UNITS

How the evolution of human tools has destroyed the efficiency of the family as an economic unit. Why we cannot have to-day the kind of family enjoyed by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Work is no longer done in the home. Play does not take place at home. Education is not a home function. What is left for the home?—The family complexes. Unlike members of the patriarchal family we have plenty of time to indulge in neuroses. It is capitalism and not communism that has destroyed the home.

44. Why do the old ladies want to safeguard the family institution? The hidden feelings about ritual purity and sexual uncleanness. To get back to orthodox medieval morality we have to abolish soap, medical prophylaxis and contraceptives; then the attitude of the Christian ascetic is reasonable. The effect of hygiene on ethics and sexual aesthetics. Why the early Christians were right to fight baths. How we are trying to keep alive pre-soap ethics in a post-soap age.

45. The effects of the invention of medical safeguards and of contraception upon ethical ideas is as important as the effect of the invention of soap. A picture of sexual realities in the Middle Ages when Light-o'-Love was Death-in-Life. Why it is illegal to tell a young man that twopennyworth of a certain chemical may safeguard him from physical destruction.

### PROPHECY NO. XX

BY 1975 SEXUAL FEELING AND MARRIAGE WILL HAVE  
NOTHING TO DO WITH ONE ANOTHER.

46. Our orthodox sex ethics rest on four associated ideas which could not be disassociated until technological evolution succeeded in doing so. Physical desire, romantic love, procreation and the economic unit called marriage. How they have been affected by the evolution of tools. What is the future of romantic love likely to be? Our generation does not show a weakening of moral fibre, but a strengthening of technological equipment with which to fight the decrees of the god of disease and dirt.

47. What then is the future of the sexual relation? Sophisticated sex a class product. In what the spice of life consists for the great majority. Why bishops should be glad to see couples lying on the grass in public parks. The black future for love poetry. Sex has been deliberately over-emphasized in the Age of Stupidity and it is



## CONTENTS

due to be put in its proper place. The notable deception caused by trousers and skirts and why we should have four or five distinctive types of dress. The crime of labelling some individuals surplus women.

### PROPHECY NO. XXI

MANKIND, LIKE THE SOCIAL INSECTS, WILL BE DIVIDED INTO FOUR OR FIVE DIFFERENT SEXUAL TYPES AND WILL FORGET THE HE AND THE SHE IN THE NEEDS OF PHYSIOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL DIVISION OF LABOUR.

48. A rapid glance at the changing code of morals in a future where not only there is soap but there is not private property.

### PROPHECY NO. XXII

CRIME WILL BE CONSIDERED AS A DISEASE AFTER 1985 AND WILL CEASE TO EXIST BY A.D. 2000.

The present chaos of common opinion as to what constitutes a crime and what justifies its punishment. Why the idealists have often made things worse by trying to reform social practice with regard to crime. The new definition that will simplify matters. Examples of new crimes introduced during the last few years in Germany, England, Russia, Spain and the U.S.A. The coming of bare-faced relativity. The criminal of the future will be the man who weakens the social unit in its struggle for survival.

49. Abnormal conduct not the only conduct that will be socially controlled. The scientific control of temperaments. Why a man chooses his profession. From mud pies to bridge building and from constipation to banking. Why men have so great a love of business and money transactions. How this love will be eliminated. How there will be a danger that men like William Blake will be cured before they exhibit their symptoms.

50.

### PROPHECY NO. XXIII

HUMAN BEINGS WILL BECOME STANDARDIZED FOR A TIME, BUT EVENTUALLY THE STATE WILL ENCOURAGE INDIVIDUALITY AGAIN ALONG CERTAIN CAREFULLY CONTROLLED LINES.

How the war against individualism is only necessary in order to eliminate anti-social competition between the units within the society. Freedom for this parasitical competition is very popular. What is the true freedom? It concerns the world of dreams and not the world of reality. It is a necessary possession of the individual as artist, not as economic or political being.

51. What does this signify for the future of art? There are two sorts of art in our day and,

## CONTENTS

### PROPHECY NO. XXIV

THE Highbrow art of our day will have no future save as a historic curiosity, since it has sacrificed everything to a misguided individualism.

Some of the vices of the high-brow artist ; his snobism ; his contempt for his audience ; his obscurantism. To enjoy the high-brow artist you must have had an expensive education. James Joyce and Proust, the glories and shames of art in our time. The theatre ruined by actors and dancers who think that they are more important than their audiences. The future artist will not be an exhibitionist but a servant ; as has always been the case in periods of great art. The artist has no special message about the universe and he has no right to found a new religion.

52. What about low-brow art ? Why the high-brow criticizes low-brow art. The effect of the evolution of tools on art. The paramount importance of the Movies. Is the artist a slave in Russia ? Is he free in England and America ? Slavery to entertainment value. Eisenstein on Russia and Hollywood.

53. Finally, what of religion ? There will always be a future for religion so long as human beings are emotional. But the future religion will be the expression of the emotional solidarity of the social unit, not as now the weapon of a class. The new religions of fascism and communism. Which is false and which is true ?



## INTRODUCTION

I AM writing this introduction in Barcelona : a city struggling to establish a new order and ruthlessly liquidating the old.

Often during these last days when Italian aeroplanes, given to the blood-brothers of Fascism in Spain, have been landing Moors to destroy the Spanish people, in the name of patriotism, I have wondered if my second prophecy would prove false. Have I not given capitalism too long a time before it must fall a victim to its own suicidal mania ? Will not every nation in the world be drawn into the battle that is raging in this amazing country ? The Fascist International knows that this is no internal quarrel of generals and anarchists. Is there an anti-Fascist International conscious of its danger, or will Spain be allowed to join the rest, so that the Mediterranean becomes a Fascist lake ; so that France may follow the same path to-morrow ; so that the British Lion may be left alone in surprised, injured dignity in a world that swears its roar is only a bray after all ?

On July 19, 1936, Spain offered Europe one more chance of saving itself. On that day an ill-armed people rose and defeated a long-planned military Fascist uprising. By tearing up the paving-stones of their streets and holding on against even modern weapons of war, they played their part that freedom should not perish utterly from the face of the earth. Just as the Spanish people struck the first blow that

## INTRODUCTION

was to destroy Napoleon when the mamelouks of the dictator cut them down in the streets of Madrid on May 2, 1808, so they have struck the first blow against an even worse dictatorship to-day.

In those days British people were the most eager to come to their assistance ; to-day they hang back. Why this is so can be seen in the body of this book. Caught between two fires, British conservatism can do nothing but crouch nearer to the hole in the ground which is to be its grave. It is left to others to lead the world forward. Russia, Spain and England in their various ways destroyed Napoleon : Russia and Spain stand once more between us and the worse dictators of our day—but where is England ? England seems to have deserted. How this has come about, and what will come of it, is the story that I have tried to tell. I may have given capitalism more rope than it needs to hang itself ; we may all be at war before these words are published. It will not invalidate the rest.

In the course of the book I have quoted several times a paragraph from *The Times* Annual Financial and Commercial Review, dated February 11, 1936 :

Natural causes have again improved the wheat position, when schemes for the artificial raising of prices failed. In 1934 the drought in the United States assisted producers to obtain more remunerative prices, and in 1935 adverse weather conditions in Argentina resulted in a further improvement in the world wheat situation.

I quote it here once more in order to place it next to a paragraph that appeared in the same London *Times* on July 17, 1936. Speaking of Canada it says :

All prospects of a good crop, which, by increasing rural purchasing power, would provide fresh stimulus to the business recovery visible during the first half of 1936, have been ended during the past fortnight by a heat wave of

## INTRODUCTION

abnormal severity, accompanied by an almost general absence of rain-fall.

Now I have quoted the first paragraph several times as an example of the underlying causes of the decay and collapse of our civilization. Rome did not decline and fall because it became profligate, but because large estates, standing armies, unemployed, destroyed purchasing power, clogged the economic machinery and brought it to a standstill. The rise of Fascism and Communism, the evident decrepitude of democratic institutions, are not due to our no longer reading Mill on Liberty ; they are due to our having come to a stage when bad weather brings more profit than good. But the crowning absurdity is that our rulers should think that a drought in the United States of America in 1934 can produce good results, while a drought in Canada in 1936 produces bad.

It is this sort of thing that explains the scenes around me to-day—burned-out churches, armed militiamen at every corner, great hotels and private office buildings appropriated by an infuriated and determined proletariat. Every night they take a Fascist or two out on the lonely roads outside Barcelona and shoot him. A few miles away in Zaragoza the Fascists are doing the same and much more to the anti-Fascists. It is not because humanity has gone mad. It is because the system has grown too old to work any longer.

We are rushing post-haste into a future which may be the Dark Ages once more ; or it may be a future of great promise. Which ? I have tried to consider the question without personal prejudice and to describe a future which seems logically most likely to happen, rather than the future which perhaps I should prefer to see.



# A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

## CHAPTER I

### CAN WE ALTER THE FUTURE ?

“**L**ET us eat, drink and be merry ; for to-morrow we die.” It has never been a popular philosophy except with a few sophisticated members of leisured and cultured classes. It is even then probably to be associated with an impaired metabolism, a certain costiveness.

The normal human being does not enjoy the present unless he feels reasonably sure of the future. Not necessarily sure of next week, next year, twenty years hence ; but of the future as a great unfolding certainty, a sort of safe mother in whose apron we shall at last, wanderings over, bury our faces. And once men feel uncertain of the future, they begin to try and escape from the present ; which means moral suicide.

Indeed, whatever the rational objections to a profound belief in another world, or in an inevitable day of reckoning, or in personal immortality, such beliefs have immense practical value. Uncertainty, for better or for worse, breeds day-dreams ; a certain faith in phantasms helps us to get on with our business.



## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

It is because these beliefs have worn thin in our day that our world is so full of "escapists". You may *hope* for individual immortality, in a restful paradise ; for an eternal harem with the Mahommedans, or eternal concerts in an ice rink with the Fundamentalists Christians ; or with the Buddhists you may look forward to a blissful passing out ; but have you a firm faith in any of these ? Do you regard them as so certain that you *must* convert your next-door neighbour, that he may be as happy as yourself ? No ! you do not.

And so you go to Los Angeles to found a new religion ; or extract from Oxford a Salvation Army disguised in dinner-jackets and aitches in the right places ; or commend the unintelligible wherever it is to be found ; or transfer your mind, with D. H. Lawrence, to your belly and substitute for the facts of life the fictions begotten by psycho-sexual impotence ; or you fling off your imaginative birthright, which is a coat of many colours, and content yourself with a shirt of one ; or you wander around among people like yourself wallowing in verbal superlatives which hide the vacuum of your no-feeling ; or bury your lonely insufficiency in the warm community reek of clubs, where all think alike, or, better still, do not think at all, but play cards : escapes from the present because you have no clear idea about the future. You find life without meaning ; you have, you flatter yourself, seen through it, through progress and through all enthusiasms. Abandoning the few things that make man dignified, you become a water-beetle and skate over the surface of things.

You are like a little gentleman in a flimsy two-seater driven vaguely over the railway tracks at the moment when an express is approaching. You are arguing to

## CAN WE ALTER THE FUTURE?

your bored companion that there is no such thing as progress, and, distracted by the sound of your own voice, you stall your car. "I deplore the coming of mechanical transport," you say, murmuring nostalgically about horse and buggy days. The train continues its journey. Little man, what now? Do not mistake me; it is indeed pleasant for a man to sit and loaf with his soul, to watch life from his study window, judiciously, without getting excited; to play a little, to make love, and to sleep; leaving action to busybodies and efficiency in practical matters to those who have nothing better to be. There have been times in the history of the world when a man could be content with nothing more than this, and it is to be hoped that such times will come again. But they are not now.

### 2

Suppose you do not want to be an "escapist"; suppose you want to make yourself as intellectually efficient as possible; how are you to face the future?

Does mere knowledge of the future make for this efficiency? What is the use of knowing, when we are powerless to alter the inevitable march of events?

But first what is intellectual efficiency? It is not merely the sort of thing that leads to a rise in salary, nor yet to the understanding of all the latest scientific theories, nor to a remembering of innumerable "epoch-making" books.

It is an ability to think a thing through to the end without at any point being sidetracked by your emotions. All of us most of the time, and many of us all the time, fail to follow things through to a point where they lead to useful action, because our emotions are tugging at our reasons and suggesting easy shortcuts. Now this will always happen so long as we allow

### 3

ourselves to harbour inconsistent ideas in our practical philosophies of life ; and intellectual efficiency means being consistent in our ideas, not harbouring several contradictory ideas at once.

Let us admit that it is impossible to be sure that our philosophy of life is the right one ; we can at least do all we can to make it consistent. Thus we can base our attitude towards life upon modern scientific philosophy, but if we do so, we must not dump down a bit of Plato in the middle of it. Otherwise when our mind, thinking scientifically, comes to an unpleasant conclusion, we avoid it by being Platonic. Or, again, there are some people who construct a working philosophy out of Marx, Lenin and Communism until they find it leading to a conclusion that they do not like ; whereupon they dump in a bit of the Sermon on the Mount, or pretend that Jesus was a Communist and Marx a Christian. They save their emotional comfort in this way, but they do so at the cost of intellectual efficiency ; it will never lead to useful thinking or useful action.

Most people collect ideas just as they collect bric-à-brac and ornaments. Their acquisitive instinct is so strong that they want to possess every new idea that comes along without exercising taste or care in the way they arrange them. Thus in this interior decorating of their minds they do not even stick to one period, but put an eighteenth-century antique next to a metallic modern creation. It would be better if they did not think at all.

Of course it is not altogether within the individual's power to avoid loss of intellectual efficiency by the inconsistency of his ideas. We may want to be " sane ", but if we live in an insane society how can we be ? If society is inconsistent the individuals form-

## CAN WE ALTER THE FUTURE?

ing it must also be inconsistent. Consider Mussolini : there is much in his philosophy of national efficiency and preparedness for the struggle for survival that is undoubtedly sane and consistent given certain premises, as that world problems can be solved in terms of aggressive nationalism. But since this is itself absurd, the sanity of Mussolini in theory leads to the insanity of the Abyssinian adventure in practice.

Or take an example nearer home. It is doubtful whether England has ever been governed by a more remarkably sane bunch of rulers than at present. Think of the legal consistency of Sir John Simon, the middle-brow sanity of honest Mr. Baldwin, the safeness of Mr. Neville Chamberlain in City matters, the truly national consistency of almost all their colleagues, all birds of a feather, the *medio tutissimus ibis*. But consider for a moment the following paragraph from that extremely sane document "*The Times*" *Annual Financial and Commercial Review* :

Natural causes have again improved the wheat position, when schemes for the artificial raising of prices failed. In 1934 the drought in the United States assisted producers to obtain more remunerative prices and in 1935 adverse weather conditions in Argentina resulted in a further improvement in the world wheat situation.

Consider the implications of that paragraph, and remember that all the sanity of the British Government, the honesty of Baldwin, the legality of Simon, the safeness of Chamberlain is being used to try and save a system where drought and famine are the friends, and not the enemies of mankind. How can any individual caught up in such an inconsistent system be intellectually efficient in the long run ? Of course we might say that by being intellectually efficient we mean seeing life whole ; but unfortunately most people who

use that phrase are using it to hide a certain cowardice or laziness. They mean that we should be willing to see so many sides to any question that we doubt there being any one side more true than the others ; so that we become " tolerant " and satisfied that we need do nothing about it. That is not really seeing life whole, but seeing it as a mass of jigsaw puzzle pieces, which look so complicated that we lose all desire to fit them together. One usually finds that a person who does this has secreted a good-sized piece in his pocket and is afraid that if the puzzle is done he may be made to give it up. We do better to find half a dozen pieces that fit, and to force the rest into our pattern. But of course if our selected pattern is the right one we do best of all.

Now in beginning to write this book, I am reasoning somewhat as follows : unless a man is content to escape from reality down the by-ways of his day-dreams, he will not be happy unless he is intellectually efficient ; and that means he must have a consistent philosophy of life ; and he cannot have this unless the drama of the present has a meaning for him ; and the present can have no meaning unless it is to be found in the future ; so that our happiness and our efficiency as thinking beings depends upon the clarity with which we see what the future holds.

## 3

But what is the good of studying the future ; seeing that we are so powerless to alter it or control it ?

That is a point of view that has recurred frequently in human history. Solomon sat in his palace surrounded by ivory, apes, and peacocks, and wrote : " I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever : nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it.

## CAN WE ALTER THE FUTURE?

That which hath been is now ; and that which is to be hath already been ; and God requireth that which is past." What is the good ? It is beyond our control.

On my first day at an English Public School I sat down to School Chapel with some four hundred boys. All of them, like myself, had come to be trained for a future about which certain guesses had been made. Actuaries had worked out our " expectation of life " ; a certain large number of us would be alive in fifty years' time, and all of us would be dead in a hundred.

Most of us would enter a profession, a considerable number of the more stupid would drift into the army and " discipline " frontier tribes in India, until, worn out by a rather useless but pleasant open-air life, with bad livers and worse tempers, they would retire, write letters to *The Times* and, at the appropriate moment, die in bed.

Some of us looked only far enough into the future to hope for a cricket or football Blue, at Oxford or Cambridge, after which, fun set aside, we would enter our fathers' businesses. We would spend our honeymoon at Bexhill and in decent time send our children back to the old school ; and by that time we would be secretaries of our local tennis club and subscribers to *Amateur Gardening*. We hardly thought of a trip to the Continent, though fleeting day-dreams of the Louvre or the Folies Bergère may have enlivened our idlest moments. Some, of course, since the age of opportunity and servants in England was evidently coming to an end, were thinking of an opening in the Colonies.

Suppose that on that morning, at 9.10 a.m. of September 20, 1910, the Headmaster of Headmasters had appeared above the altar and read from a scroll in his hands the names of one hundred of us boys ;

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

the name of the boy to my right, five of the boys on the bench behind, and so forth ; and had said : “ These hundred boys, one in four of those present, will never have children, will never marry, will never enter their fathers’ businesses. In seven years their bodies, more or less intact, will be lying in foreign graves.” He would have spoken the truth, of course ; but what difference would it have made ?

Nobody said a word ; we spent five years preparing for a world that was never going to exist either for those who survived the war or for those who were slaughtered.

And yet looking back it is not difficult to see that the forces leading to the inevitable catastrophe of 1914 could have been recognized and their results predicted. If our parents had known, could they have saved those hundred boys ? Or, not being able to save them, could they not have given them a carefree boyhood, since they were to be denied all manhood by the stupidity of their elders ?

And we who are left, and have boys in our turn, are we powerless to prevent those same forces working to the same result ? Apparently our parents never thought of such possibilities, but we have been warned, and we dread them night and day. We cannot wash our hands of the future. But what can we do ? What can we do ?

### 4

“ Nothing ”, wrote Solomon, “ can be put to it, nor anything taken from it.” We say it in a slightly different way. We speak of Determinism, the depressing spectre overshadowing the will-power of our age. Even the gods cannot alter the future, we say ; so how can we set about to do what is impossible to them ? Nobody can face the future reasonably unless he has

## CAN WE ALTER THE FUTURE?

made his peace with the spectre of Determinism. And first we must distinguish between the appeal to it, which is made by self-indulgent half-thinkers seeking an escape from all obligation and responsibility, and the fact which it implies and which cannot be denied.

When the well-meaning dabbler in current world affairs loses his thread and, turning his eyes skyward, murmurs : " What we need is a change in the hearts of man ", then is the time to tell him that the motions of the human heart are *determined* by economic factors. You may treat him gently and remind him how in the New Testament we are warned that wheresoever our treasure is, there our heart is also ; or you may treat him rough and tell him that until profits are taken out of munitions, white slavery, and cocaine, men will have the hearts of death-merchants, pimps and poisoners. In either case you will be reading him a lesson in determinism.

Or when the lady speaks of the American Constitution as of something divine—for in America there are emotionally starved females who find the same sort of relief in that document as English neuropaths do in Pèkinese—and suggests that only by sticking to it can America come out of the depression ; then is the time, perhaps, to tell her that the goodness or badness of any form of government is *determined* by its relevance to the practical needs of the moment ; that yesterday's meat is to-day's poison ; and that, specifically, a document drawn up by a roomful of ex-English country gentlemen in an effort to preserve intact an eighteenth-century paradise may not help a modern industrial society through its present troubles. You can tell her, if she has remained in the room and not hurried off to tell the police that you are in the pay of Moscow, that America to-day is like a vast ocean liner in distress



whereon the possession of life-boats, -belts, and even a telephone system between bridge and engine-room have been declared unconstitutional. In short, that the goodness or badness of political forms is *determined* by the economic needs of the day.

Or when a half-wit tells you that what America needs—I use American examples since my American readers will like me to talk about them and my English will like me to talk about other people—is an Abraham Lincoln, you can say that great men are not produced like rabbits out of a hat, but that the material facts of the moment *determine* the nature of the ruler. The inanities of the boom-period produced Hoover and Coolidge and Harding, the depression produced Roosevelt, the Treaty of Versailles produced Hitler, the inconsistencies of political democracy produced J. Ramsay MacDonald, the breakdown of a backward country under the stress of war produced Lenin. To say that these gentlemen produced their epoch is to put the cart before the horse ; it is like saying that the Union Jack or the Stars and Stripes produced the Freedom of the Seas. It is the mistake of taking the symbol for the reality, or the symptom for the disease.

All this you can tell your half-wit, and explain that economic determinism is intended in your lesson. But, since his belief in Baldwin, or Hoover, or Lincoln, or God is psychologically determined by his personal experience, you must not be disappointed if he only shakes his head and refers you to Carlyle on Heroes and Hero Worship.

Now all these are examples of Determinism rightly conceived, and as such do no violence to the human will. We must accept as a fact the determining of human ideals and ideas by material conditions ; we must realize that no man can say of himself, I will be

## CAN WE ALTER THE FUTURE?

a hero or a leader, unless he is prepared to lead in the direction that things are already going ; we must recognize that all political theories and still more all political documents have only temporary value, since they will become out of date through the change of economic realities which alone determine their value—all this is elementary common sense and it need not make us feel impotent in the face of the future. But there is another use of Determinism that is dangerous, for if we really believed in it, our vitality would be sapped. And since many, in their quest for the ultra-modern, have fallen a prey to it, this other use is assuredly a danger to our age.

### 5

The eighteenth-century revolutionary and the nineteenth-century liberal were cheered on their way by a conviction that they were making history ; lifting humanity up on their broad shoulders. We, on the other hand, in our day, are almost as convinced that history is making us ; and indeed crushing us.

Scientific thought is the very stuff out of which our age is made, and we have taken over from science without fully understanding them certain fundamental concepts and have applied them to practical politics and everyday philosophy. This is what we have done with the idea of Determinism.

To be consistent determinists, we say, surely we ought to abolish the conditional clause altogether. " If I try, I shall succeed " ; why, there is no " if " about it : it is already determined that I shall or shall not try. It is in the hands of our past, of our unconscious conflicts, of our conditioned reflexes, of our endocrine balance and our whole reflex machinery of metabolism. No, there is no " if " about it, so *what is the use of*

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

*trying*? To reason thus makes of scientific determinism only another name for laziness.

Now nobody can consistently abolish conditional clauses ; nobody can argue : " If I hurry, I shall catch that train ; oh well ! there is no ' if ' about it, it is determined that I shall miss it." We could not carry on the job of living on that basis. Actually people only abolish the conditional clause as an excuse for slackness. It is doubtless determined that some people shall be slack, just as it is determined that others shall be energetic, and by this time it is surely clear where the fallacy of all such thinking lies.

You must be a determinist, yes ; but to be deterministic about anything less than the whole of the universe is certain to lead to the exclusion of something essential to the particular detail you are considering. You are bound to believe that if you existed outside this complete and mechanically determined universe, looking at it as if it were a watch, you could see how every wheel fitted in and what position each would have at any future time. But neither you nor any other being is outside the universe and so no one can see it as a watch. You are part of the deterministic universe ; and what is more important still, the fact that you cannot and will not act like a determinist is also part of the deterministic universe.

It has moreover been determined that some people will be influenced by reading this book. It has been determined that even intelligent people will try, and moreover think that they are succeeding, in influencing the future. It would of course be foolish for me to try to influence with this book those who are determined (in either sense) not to be influenced by it. But nevertheless I am determined (in both senses) to write it.

## CAN WE ALTER THE FUTURE?

In short Determinism, though it is a very important matter in theoretical philosophy, when we apply it to practical thinking on everyday problems, is likely to make fools of us. We do better and, in fact, we *must* continue to think and act as if the conditional clause not only exists, but must exist ; as if uncertainty was a part of the universe and not merely a defect of our minds. We must do this because it is part of the laws of a deterministic universe that we shall be bad determinists.

In fact we must distinguish very carefully between the Determinism that says there is an unending chain of material causes and effects in the understanding of which lies the key to a knowledge of the future and an evaluation of the present, and the Determinism which is merely a disguise for an Oriental fatalism.

We shall be good enough determinists for all practical purposes if we fall back as seldom as possible on "acts of God" as explanations of our difficulties. Instead, for example, of regarding a great drought as an act of God, we must see that it was caused by human stupidity in denuding vast tracts of land of moisture-conserving trees ; and that a return of drought can be avoided not by prayer and fasting, but by man's common sense in growing more trees.

In short, the useful sort of determinism leads to our seeing that responsibility for the future lies in our hands and not in the hands of a blundering and tired Providence. It lies in our hands because one material event leads to another and among all the other material events an important one is our own ability as material human beings to do material things, such as to build dams, plant trees, invent machines, print books, make speeches, alter constitutions legally or otherwise, go on strike, rebel ; every one of which material acts in-

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

fluences the future in one way or other whether we can calculate the influence or not.

Of course somebody outside the universe altogether and studying the universe as a whole would be able to predict how all these wheels would go round, and a certain type of person inside the universe once the future has become the past can say, "I told you so ; it could not have been otherwise " ; in practice the first person is ruled out, and the second is of no importance. For ourselves in spite of the implications of Determinism we can face the future with the conditional clause and unabated wills. Unabated but, we should be careful to add, chastened wills ; willing to contribute to the future that is bound to be, but unwilling to waste our time working towards a future that can never be.

### 6

In what directions must our wills be chastened ? How are we to know that we are not wasting our energies trying to bring about a future that is destined never to be ?

The best way is to consider certain other conditional clauses beside " if god will ", that must be eschewed.

" If the world listens to me, then all will be well." . . . That is a dangerously common conditional clause which is really only " if god will " expressed in a slightly disguised form, the form rather frequently used, for example, by Mr. H. G. Wells.

There is no adequate reason for supposing that the future will be formed by a dictatorship of well-trained, benevolent brains, either in agreement with Mr. Wells or using quite another set of blue prints from those which he has provided with such thought. "

If history teaches no other lesson, it certainly sup-

## CAN WE ALTER THE FUTURE?

plies ample evidence that brains, benevolent or otherwise, are impotent of themselves in the shaping of human destiny. If all Europe in the Dark Ages had possessed the wisdom of Socrates, it could not have prevented the consequences of the gradual drying up of Central Asia ; and when great movements in history are traced to their sources, they are usually found to lie in empty stomachs rather than in full heads.

Of course it would be splendid if Mr. Wells could get together with M. Puits, Herr Brunnen, Señor Pozo and the rest and hit on a plan ; God, the invisible king, would be so impressed that he would certainly add his quota of water from a rock in the wilderness ; but the laws of human evolution are otherwise disposed. The world will not listen to Mr. Wells except in so far as Mr. Wells listens to and interprets the world. Indeed his occasional success in doing this is the reason that he has been one of the great writers of our time.

No, the world will not listen to you, or to any other genius, and if you want to get to grips with the future you had best begin by chastening yourself so far as to eschew that particular conditional clause.

“ If so and so happens, I shall dislike it, therefore it must not be allowed to happen.” How dangerous is this conditional clause, especially when it lurks partly concealed on the very outskirts of our conscious thought. It has brought to nothing many a brave adventurer into the unexplored future.

Thus, anyone could have seen as the nineteenth century wore on amid the increasing clatter of machinery that the day of the peasant and his arts was over, that energy must be concentrated upon making factories and factory towns fit to work and live in. Yet the school of William Morris talked incessantly of a day when people would love their work,

because it had become creative and individual again, although it was obvious that the best hope lay in the increase of machines until all the dirty work could be entrusted to them.

William Morris hated the tendencies of his time and tried to put the clock back as a defence against them ; in consequence his theories are to-day a beautiful unsubstantial dream and the children of the machine age would regard his imagined heaven as a very hell on earth.

Often enough, when we oppose a prophecy about the future, it is upon no better grounds than that we would prefer to be living in the past, and since the present is not the past, we hope that the future may be. We sigh for the eighteenth century in the twentieth and hope to rediscover it in the twenty-first.

But we should remember that *liking* is a faculty implanted in us so that we may fit into the life that we are destined to lead. Nature makes us like the present, more or less, because we have to put up with it in any case ; but as to the far future, we shall not have to live in that, and nature therefore does not bother to make us like it at all.

It should be noted too, that, since nature is very subtle, it makes our liking even of the present a trifle imperfect ; so that we shall be impelled to change it at least a little way in the direction of the future. There is a certain type of Communist who is peculiarly apt to distort the future into a form more agreeable from his private point of view than it is likely to be. He is the individual who is able to do nothing but argue for the sake of argument, who nevertheless is enthusiastic for the communist world of the future, because he imagines himself a Commissar. He would not be so enthusiastic if he thought for a moment that the Com-

## CAN WE ALTER THE FUTURE?

munists, being above all believers in efficiency, will have little use for him, because he can do nothing useful.

Indeed, whatever your beliefs may be, if your picture of the future is too delightful, beware of it; there is almost certainly something wrong somewhere. And be sure that you have better reasons for rejecting someone else's picture of the future than that it does not please you. Your vision of the future is not likely to be given you sugar-coated, if only because it is not meant for you to swallow.

But that does not mean that you need not take your share in preparing it for others to swallow; it may look like medicine from a distance, but it will do nobody any good to try and change the bottles on that account.

No, our wills should be unabated, but chastened by the reflection that we influence the future only by throwing in our lot, as it were, with inexorable, unalterable law. It is not our business to discuss what the future ought to be, but rather what it will be.

And the future described in this book is not in the least what the writer would create were he god; it is rather the future that seems to him inevitable, given the working out of certain inexorable, unalterable laws.

What are these laws that govern the future in spite of any little private desires we might like to impose upon them? They are, in a phrase, the natural laws of all evolving life; the laws which have brought man thus far on his way from the amœba in the primordial slime.



## CHAPTER II

### THE UNALTERABLE LAWS

#### 7

MAN is an animal ; and, as such, has no more claims to a manifest destiny than any other. His future, like theirs, depends upon the degree of his obedience to certain unalterable laws.

Some animals are extinct without achievement ; others achieved a temporary supremacy, as the royal Dinosaurs, who ruled in the Age of Lizards. Others, again, have gained a modest permanence amid the sands of time, as the ant which, having established itself in a secure niche, has not altered a hair's breadth in millions of years.

It is partly, no doubt, an indefinable cunning, and partly a matter of luck,—bad luck, one must note with the Dinosaurs, who put their money on size, and so have survived only as the most visited of exhibits in our museums of natural history. In passing we may observe that judging in terms of geological time, it is the specialist that becomes extinct ; the Dinosaurs specialized in bulk and could never retrace their steps back to a reasonable stature. We can see similar catastrophes in the province of economic evolution.

Countless millions of years ago a single-celled naked amœba split in two. Its volume had begun to exceed its best interests and for purely mechanical reason \*it resorted to the simplest form of reproduction. To-day

## THE UNALTERABLE LAWS

the descendant of one half floats in some stagnant pool, or perhaps, having evaded the filters of the fountains of Rome, was drunk this morning by the imperial Cæsar of the modern world. The descendant of the other half is Mussolini himself, and the Abyssinian shepherd, whom the great man, refreshed by his morning glass of water, goes about to civilize. Unalterable laws working in a boundless field of chance made them what they are to-day in their likeness or unlikeness to their common ancestor ; and control their future destinies.

Which has achieved most, the half that remained in the backwaters of fate, or the half that evolved into the slayer and the slain ? Both have the same simple origin ; which has the most contented present ? And which the most secure future ?

There are sound reasons for congratulating the amœba that remained an amœba, especially if mere survival is the aim of living matter ; for, from the point of view of survival, stagnation seems more successful and less exhausting than the slow climb upwards from type to type which has led to the acquisition by the amœba's more restless descendants of, among other things, a rational soul.

If survival is the thing by which life is to be judged, man is miserably uncertain of the prize. He has to change his habits incessantly and in spite of his reason only succeeds in doing so just in time. On the other hand, many forms of life settled down long ago to an almost perfect rapport with their surroundings.

They have acquired the weapons needed against their enemies, and when the uncertainties of life for them are very great, they arm themselves with a stupendous fecundity, which, by a gigantic massacre of innocents, secures that some will survive.

They have found their appropriate climates and never wander out of them.

They have set boundaries between themselves and their neighbours, and demarcated spheres of influence, so that they never destroy their fellow members within the species by internecine strife, with rare exceptions, usually associated with the pleasures of physical love or the anxieties of the maternal instinct.

All this animals have done without the use of reason ; man with reason has done not so well. He is a wanderer ; he is at odds with his geographical environment ; he is less stable in his communities ; and he destroys his fellow man. So that while the rest of nature is red in tooth and claw, man has added a bloody mind ; nay more, in his peculiar faculty of building imaginary worlds out of this real one he paints these bloody too.

It is still far from certain that man will remain what he believes himself to be, the culmination of evolving life. At present from a materialistic and realistic point of view he is merely one of the less successful slaves of universal law. His future depends on his acquiring greater proficiency in obedience, not on his learning to surmount the law so that he becomes free.

And what are these laws ? Darwin summed them up on the closing page of *The Origin of Species* :

It is interesting to contemplate a tangled bank, clothed with many plants of many kinds, with birds singing in the bushes, with various insects flitting about, and with worms crawling through the damp earth, and to reflect that these elaborately constructed forms, so different from each other, and dependent on each other in so complex a manner, have all been produced by laws acting around us.

These laws taken in the largest sense, being growth with reproduction ; inheritance, which is almost implied by

## THE UNALTERABLE LAWS

reproduction ; variability from the indirect and direct action of the conditions of life, and from use and disuse ; a ratio of increase so high as to lead to a struggle for life, and as a consequence to natural selection, entailing divergence of character and the extinction of less improved forms. Thus, from the war of nature, from famine and death, the most exalted object we are capable of conceiving, namely the production of the higher animals, directly follows.

That these are the laws which govern the future of man in his societies we shall presently see ; for the economic and political evolution which is leading us on to the future is nothing but an episode in this long uniform biological evolution.

Meanwhile we must remember that Darwin brought order into the study of our animal past by showing how outside forces worked upon the living being to reproduce in it inevitable changes. To bring order into our study of the future we must realize that this process is still going on ; that it is the outside forces, the economic forces as they are called, which work upon us and our societies, forcing us and them along inevitable paths of evolution. It is all too easy to imagine that at some unspecified moment in his long evolution from lower form, man said : " I will now become the arbiter of my destiny " ; and that later he was able to continue : " I am tired of feudalism and will try capitalism " ; and, that soon he will complete the good work, " I will now substitute state socialism for imperialist capitalism." This seems reasonable on the analogy of everyday things, but in fact, the changes that have been were not made by man, they were made by " the indirect and direct action of the conditions of life " in accordance with the laws which change life ; and the changes which are to be, will be made in like manner.

Moreover, when we think of the political and economic problems that beset us, we must realize

above all that their solution can only come in accordance with the biological laws upon which they rest.

8

Democracy or Dictatorship? Communism or Capitalism? There is no free choice between alternatives here; it is not within the power of the wise men of your community or mine to choose one and reject the other. They may be successive stages through which our communities will be forced to go, owing to the inevitable laws of economic evolution; and as individuals we shall like or dislike them, assist or oppose them, try to keep them going, or help to overthrow them; but our success and happiness in these attitudes will depend on whether we have been able to put our money on the right horse, or have backed a loser.

Fascism or Communism? The question as to which of these, if either, our communities will adopt, is a matter of the laws of evolution. Given certain uncontrollable economic conditions your community will go fascist and mine communist, or vice versa; and if one of these chances to be on the direct line of successful evolution the community that passes to it will survive; the other will become extinct.

In any case these political and economic stages are simply part of an ordered biological evolution, seen on a highly magnified scale through the lenses of our immediate personal interests. Unless we realize this we cannot speculate clearly about the future.

When a single-celled animal was faced with the alternative of becoming a multicellular being; when a solitary wasp was faced with the alternative of becoming a social wasp; when some early sea-dweller, stranded upon dry land by the retreating tide, hesitated

## THE UNALTERABLE LAWS

between making the best of its new quarters and struggling back into the arms of the sea ; they were faced with precisely the same kind of dilemma as man faces when he asks himself, Communism or Capitalism ? Democracy or Fascism ?

Ah !, you say, how anthropomorphic you have become ! Can't you see that these other animals had no choice ; that they could not hesitate and consider alternatives ; that they were forced blindly on the way they went by outside law ? Precisely ; that is undoubtedly so ; and it is equally true in the case of man. He has the phantom of a choice, the exact nature of which we shall leave to the philosophers to determine, but in fact he is no more free to choose between one economic form and another than they were free to choose their biological evolution. He cannot say: Let there be light ; he can only use his reason to discover that at a certain hour day will break, and to profit by what his reason thus discovers.

Oh, but we have reason to guide us, and they had nothing but blind instinct ! How easily that word "blind" joins itself to instinct and helps us to beg the question ! Neither instinct nor reason causes evolution ; indeed they are both tools ground out by the blind working of exterior forces. Let us compare their natures.

In the beginning of life there were many single-celled animals, which, when their bulk became a disadvantage, split in two as Mussolini's half-brothers are doing every day in every pond and stream in Italy to-day. Occasionally instead of the two halves going their separate ways, they remained in contact, and the world saw, unmoved, the first cases of Siamese Twins. Unlike the later ones, these twins found their twinship

advantageous ; it led to a highly economic division of labour between them ; the aberration proved to have survival value and grew more common. But it was no " blind instinct " any more than it was intelligent design that complicated life thus.

Solitary wasps normally laid their eggs in suitable places and died. Sometimes large colonies occupied close quarters upon a sand cliff or in a grove of aloes, competing for space, light and air, co-operating in nothing, each a law unto itself. Accidents such as the survival of individuals beyond the normal time for their extinction led to a social habit, rudimentary at first, but evolving until it left no individual characteristic unchanged. The new way of life had distinct advantages over the old from the point of view of the struggle for existence, so that a larger proportion of those wasps affected by the accident survived ; and thus the social habit became more and more common. It was no blind social instinct which brought this about ; such an instinct was a consequence, which grew out of the accident or external causes leading to the change of habit.

The sea dwellers millions of years ago were washed up by the tide and stranded. Some died at once ; others happened to have the capacity to remain alive until the next tide washed them back again. A few were able to keep alive where they found themselves ; and these empirical amphibians found this accidental characteristic helpful in their struggle and, as it was blindly imparted to their offspring, more and more individuals were able to live out of the water as time went on. But it was no blind instinct to seek the air, nor an urge to evolve into higher forms ; exterior forces compelled the change against the conservatism of the normal organism.

## THE UNALTERABLE LAWS

In every case it was not instinct, blind or otherwise, that led to evolution, that settled the dilemma ; it was a series of material, geographical, climatic, physical conditions without which the instincts would not have been brought into play. It is exactly the same with the past or future development of mankind.

Instinct did not choose the path of evolution and reason will not do so either.

Once again, with man it has been and it always will be the material, geographical, climatic, physical conditions that determine his path ; and the only difference is that man has a greater ability to alter his environment to meet his material necessities than other animals and that he is self-conscious and not purely " instinctive " in his behaviour. He sees a reflection of his evolving fate and " reflects " about it ; but he does not control it.

The difference between instinct and reason can easily be exaggerated : it is only a difference in the kind of tools with which animals are equipped, and nothing more.

When, for example, England became the first great industrial and imperial nation of the modern world, it was not because of the Englishman's reasoning powers, but because of the geology and geography of England ; and these in turn made the Englishman what he is. In the same way it was not a peculiarity of the Russian reason that made Russia the first communist country, but the impact of war upon a sprawling, ill-organized community ; ill-organized because of geographical accident.

It is because we cling to a false conception of the nature and origin of our reason that we are blind to the part it will play in our future, and therefore are led astray as to that future itself. Reason, like instinct,



is a tool ground out by evolution : it is not the artist, but only the artist's brush.

9

On the ground that they possess a reasoning faculty, human beings imagine that they have developed farthest from the starting-place of life and that all other animals are in a state of arrested development compared with them.

Now it would be fruitless to argue whether a tiger or a bee was or was not on a level with a mathematician or Beethoven ; but it would not be quite so fruitless to state a case for these animals against an unemployed man in a depressed area or a silly society woman become emotionally parasitic on her toy dog.

The scientist and the artist are concerned in a special use of the reason which neither affects nor interests any living being except a handful of men, but the unemployed man and the unemployable woman are living witnesses to the lack of skill with which man uses his reason and the social habit as tools in the struggle for existence. No other social animal besides man has anything comparable to the unemployed man and the unemployable woman in its communities ; and that must be remembered quite as often as the equally obvious fact that they have nothing to compare with the mathematician and Beethoven. Where people often make a fatal error of reasoning is in excusing the presence of social misfits by the presence of the genius with high achievements ; but as far as the question of the survival of the fittest is concerned the existence of Beethoven does not help the human race, whereas the existence of the social misfits may very well incapacitate it. In short, mankind will first be judged, not by what it has done with the reason

## THE UNALTERABLE LAWS

in the realms of creative imagination, but by what it has done or left undone in the realms of mundane evolution.

Moreover, there is as much trial and error behind an ant, an eagle, or an elephant as behind a man ; and some of these have gone farther towards a final and satisfactory solution of the struggle for existence than man has done. They have reached a state of equilibrium with their surroundings ; they have entered into a stable balance of power with their neighbours ; and they have very little to fear in the future.

It is true that the eagle and the elephant might fail to survive a determined onslaught from the one completely predatory animal, man ; but even if all human ingenuity were concentrated on exterminating the ant, I doubt if the ant could be rendered extinct. A remnant in some disease-infested jungle, impassable to man, would sally forth to repopulate the earth directly man's back was turned.

Now the ant owes nothing of its impregnability to reason. The trial and error of millions of years have forged other instruments, among them one that man himself uses, the social habit. And so, from the point of view of survival, the ant has done better with the social habit and without the reason, than man has done with both. All that man can claim is that he is the most highly developed animal of those which have trusted chiefly to reason. And though from any normal human point of view reason is the noblest of vital functions, it is only one of the tools developed by living forms in the struggle for existence, not necessarily the best, not necessarily fitted to be permanently successful.

Our intellectual training, whether it be religious or rationalist, is alien to the acceptance of such a point

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

of view ; and so it will be useful to consider how animals forge the tools of survival, whether the tool be reason, the social habit, or another. Let us first consider an admirable animal that has survived by the use of a very different tool.

Upon the leaves, stem and roots of certain American grape vines there thrives a remarkable insect called phylloxera. Far back in life's first beginnings it must have had a common ancestor with man ; and from that common ancestor it has developed into what it is to-day in response to precisely the same natural laws as have led to man's having a reason and surviving into the twentieth century. Yet how different the path along which it has come.

Remember that, just as they have a common ancestor, phylloxera and man have a common task, to succeed in nourishing individuals long enough for those individuals to produce other individuals capable of nourishing themselves. Absolutely nothing else. To succeed in this task one branch of the family developed into a creature of reason, man ; another into phylloxera, achieving the same result by a complicated pattern of sexual form and behaviour.

If you were to find an infected grape vine, let us say, in June, you would have to dig it up and examine the roots to find the cause of the trouble. There you would find hundreds of little insects less than a millimetre long, fixed to the juicy root by a sucking mouth. Besides sucking the root these can do nothing but produce some forty eggs by virgin birth, for they are all females since in June not one male phylloxera exists.

Each of these forty eggs will hatch out and lay forty more eggs within a very few days, so that if there were two sucking phylloxeras on the vine in March there would be a larger population six months later than there

are human beings in the British isles. A poor look-out for the vine, but at first sight a simple life problem for the phylloxera, which has no enemies, no worries, no complicated needs.

But wait a minute ; long before the fifth generation of phylloxeras could hatch out and begin feeding, the vine would be sucked dry. For the phylloxera can do nothing but hang on to its food supply at one end and exude eggs at the other ; so that when the vine runs dry, death must come to all these unpleasant little beasts. What do they do ? How do they succeed in surviving ?

Let us note, by the way, that it is a problem which confronts many animals and among them man himself : this problem of an increasing population and a dwindling, or at least less rapidly increasing, food supply. Man has used his reason to solve the problem, and therefore, you will think, has solved it best. What is his solution ? He has produced not one solution but three solutions, and they are as follows :

(1) That as population is bound to increase to danger-point otherwise, we should be glad of all plagues, pestilences and famines which help to destroy human beings, and should add to them the miseries of poverty and the ravages of war, without which population pressure cannot be eliminated. (Malthus.)

(2) That in a world divided up into rival nations at economic war with one another free trade is dangerous, that we must therefore have every kind of restriction upon international trade, with every nation trying to force the others to buy from it, while refusing utterly to buy from them anything except munitions, and that having thus prevented the increase of food, in spite of all science can do, we must force our surplus population to emigrate. (Any reactionary nitwit.)

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

(3) That women must be encouraged to have more children, so that there shall be plenty of soldiers to fight wars which will solve the problem of surplus population by enabling the victor to steal other people's land for colonies. (Mussolini's theory of burn the contraceptives to-day so as to melt the wedding rings to-morrow.)

These are three of man's solutions for the problem of population, arrived at by the free use of his reason in an age of science ; the irrational phylloxera has done much better. Its solution does not involve either the starvation of some phylloxeras for the benefit of the rest, nor even their murder in warfare. When at the end of summer the danger-point is likely to be reached, some of the eggs, instead of developing into more suckers bound to perish of hunger, become individuals with wings. These fly off to neighbouring vines, fresh food supplies, and deposit their eggs on virgin soil.

This is not the place to discuss how it is done. Here is a biological mystery. We can make a guess, no doubt ; and it will be something like this : not all phylloxeras are equally bound to their food plant : some are more readily detached. These detachable ones get carried by chance winds to other vines in the neighbourhood, where they survive to lay eggs which develop into individuals like themselves. Since those most likely to be caught by the wind would be best fitted to survive, individuals with sail-like protuberances would become more and more common ; and the more like a wing the protuberances chanced to be, the more likely that individual would be to succeed in laying eggs. Thus in time and purely by accident the wing-like character became firmly fixed in the germ-plasm so that there are always enough winged phylloxera at

## THE UNALTERABLE LAWS

the right time to insure the survival of the species. Not all the individuals would have the genes containing the wing character so that there would always be plenty of suckers.

We who look down the wrong end of the telescope at the result of all this are astonished, because, knowing the answer, it seems impossible that the result should have been arrived at without something consciously working it out. Yet it is impossible to imagine that the phyloxera thought out the answer to the population problem ; the answer came about by the same process as that of water wearing away a stone.

Suppose some phyloxeras chanced to be brightly coloured so that they were noticed by birds and eaten, and their eggs deposited in droppings in water, and this water were used to irrigate vines ; the problem would have been solved by a chance accident. This does not happen with phyloxera, but it does happen with several other animals such as the liver fluke and other parasites, which owe their survival to a series of chances that seem to us providential simply because they happen to have been successful.

Whatever the details of these processes may be, they can be compared as to their results with the rational processes of man. Evolution produced winged phyloxera blindly ; man by reason invents an aeroplane. Now in so far as an aeroplane is a wing that you can leave at home when you do not want it, man's reason may be said to have done better ; *but* the mutations developed in the insect by blind evolution only survived *if they were of use to the insect's evolution*. Man's mutations, the aeroplane and all the rest, developed not by blind evolution but by reason, are retained whether they help his evolution or hinder it ; phyloxera's wings would have disappeared if they had been

dangerous, but man's aeroplane remains for him to bomb himself out of existence if he so wills.

Let us return to phylloxera. The winged individuals, like the suckers, are all females and capable of reproduction by virgin birth. They lay eggs on the vines and die. This new set of eggs differ from those which produced their parents in that they are of two sizes, and out of them come both male and female; neither sex being in any way like the previous generations. They have neither wings nor digestions; they fly not, neither do they suck; they simply copulate, produce one single egg, and die.

Here, again, we see an important device for securing the survival of the species. These individuals are required for the sole purpose of refreshing the germ-plasm by the crossing which comes of bisexual reproduction. It is of no value to the race that they should fly or eat, and so their bodies are incapable of either. The laws of nature do not tolerate organs that are not required to function; for that would lead to inefficiency in the struggle for existence. Man apparently thinks that he knows better.

Suckers, fliers, copulators, and fourthly one hard egg. Why this one hard egg? The season of mellow fruitfulness is nearly over and winter is not far behind, ready to freeze both sap and sappy insect. The tough egg survives beneath its shell and does not hatch out until spring; but with the budding of green leaves a fifth form appears. Once more it is a world of females and of good digestions, but unlike the suckers of last June these individuals do not hurry to the roots. In summer no doubt the roots are coolest, but in spring the spring greens are still fresh. They bore into the vine-leaves and deposit a speck of chemical which produces a swelling. Inside this swelling they lay their

## THE UNALTERABLE LAWS

eggs and out of the eggs in due course there come two further types of insect, one gall-making and leaf-eating like the parents, the others our first friends the suckers once more. Before the sun is so hot that the leaves shrivel away, these last have crept down the stem to the cool security of protected roots ; and there the whole cycle begins all over again.

In this way, by a succession of sexual forms and a happy variety of sexual habit, phylloxera has defeated the problems of over-population, of famine, of best use of available food supply, of changing seasons, of heat and cold. In reason it is man's inferior, but compare the varieties of its physical experience with the uniform straightforwardness of man's growth. There are people like the followers of Mr. D. H. Lawrence who deny that man's intelligence is anything to boast about and in preference select his sexual organs for the laurels, so long as there is nothing cerebral about their mode of functioning. How they must hang their heads in shame before phylloxera, for by their confessed standards the meanest phylloxera is higher in the evolutionary scale than Lady Chatterley's lover ; that is, if you count five generations to the individual and four successful re-entries into its mother's egg.

### IO

The physical versatility of phylloxera and man's reason—these two have developed in response to the same laws and to fulfil the same need, namely survival. Man's reason has no ulterior purpose beyond the one which is the instigator of the lowly insect's metamorphoses. We cannot face the future intelligently unless we realize all that this implies.

Moreover, evolution fashions its own tools as it goes along : in phylloxera, versatility of reproductive form, in



man a reasoning faculty. Nature discards any tool directly it ceases to be efficacious.

Now the superiority of man's reason considered as a tool in the struggle for survival is that by it man can alter as he sees fit the minor rules of the game. Thus, whereas phylloxera must eat of the grape vine, man can change his diet whenever change is to his advantage. Whereas phylloxera must survive the rigours of winter by physical adaptation, man can annul the cold with clothes and artificial heat ; whereas generations of ruthless selection were needed to give phylloxera essential motion, man can harness animals and the forces of inanimate nature. In all this the tool called reason is seen to be superlatively valuable ; but it has the seeds of inferiority within it also.

Man's reason enables him to poison himself with unnatural diets, to lower his resistance by unnatural artificial climates, overheated rooms ; to degenerate his muscles into fat by lack of exercise, and in every way to unfit himself for the ruthless struggle for survival by making himself unfit to survive.

It does not matter in the least that the human reason can develop the beauties of pure mathematics, or the music of Beethoven, when it comes down to the brutal facts which govern survival and extinction. It does not matter that we do not live by bread alone, nor that every man must add dreams to realities if he is to retain sanity and discover peace. The thing that makes man's future precarious is this danger lying within the very possession of reason : that it is a double-edged tool, which can be, and is, used to hinder as well as to secure its possessor's survival as a species.

And beyond everything else the problem of man's future can be summed up in the question whether the use of his reason will prevent him from using the other

powerful tool to which he has committed himself, namely the social habit. If we look at the political and economic problems of the day through the eyes of a biologist it is this question that we see confronting humanity on every side. Can the individuals of a form of life which has adopted the social habit be allowed an indefinite use of their reason without endangering the efficacy of the social habit as a tool in the struggle for existence? If not, will mankind sacrifice the individual reason in favour of social efficiency?

I suggest that the period of history upon which we have entered, with its Communism and Fascism, its Totalitarianism and planned economies, its flight from Democracy and rugged individualism, is really to be understood best in terms of these two questions. Reason and the social habit, their interrelations, their incompatibilities or their possible reconciliation, these are the key to the understanding of the next hundred years of human history.

To be quite clear in our thinking we must remodel the second question in these terms: Will mankind be forced by the pressure of unalterable law to sacrifice the individual reason to the social habit as that habit is given a finer edge by the grinding-stones of evolution? For it is not a matter of choice. If man as a species tolerates and encourages individual men in the use of their reason in ways contrary to the imperative needs of the species, man too will join the Dinosaurs in the museums of time.

And so when we look the future in the face determined to see it in the light of inexorable natural law, we are forced to see that man may not have any future at all. It may be, first of all, that the social habit can only be successful as a tool in the struggle for survival, if it is freed from the inefficiency forced upon it by

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

the wrong use of reason by individuals within the community. And if this is so, it may be, in the second place, impossible for man as a species to make the needed sacrifice of the reason. In that case all mankind has a short and not very merry life before it. And in any case we are now entering upon the phase of our history when the whole matter is likely to be decided.

## CHAPTER III

### REASON AND THE SOCIAL HABIT

#### II

CAN reason and the social habit be used together like a knife and fork, or is the fullest development of one incompatible with the fullest development of the other ?

Naturally it is not all use of reason that is in question. A reasonable man walks on the pavement to avoid being run over ; he obeys a social convention rationally arrived at because it would be unreasonable to do otherwise. There cannot be any conflict between reason and the social habit in this type of behaviour ; indeed the one would be impossible without the other. Man must obey certain social conventions and obedience requires a certain minimum of thought. Reason indeed is a sort of ready reckoner by which the social habit can rapidly find solutions to problems, which would otherwise have to wait on a billion years of the grinding of evolution.

But the life of society is not merely a matter of conventions, a stable pattern of behaviour ; it is also an endless chain of improvisations to meet changing conditions. Social evolution moves along a highway that is always being dug up and relaid. When a road is in normal condition, traffic passes along it without supervision thanks to the group of conventions called the rule of the road ; but when the road is up,

we cannot leave decisions to the mind of the motorists ; and so we put a policeman in charge to direct matters. What must we do with the highway along which evolution moves ? It is always full of pitfalls, burst mains, landslides, and floods.

The theory which assumes that the best way to go about the problem is to trust the reason of individual motorists to the full is called Democracy. It is the theory that reason and the social habit are knife and fork, that only by the most free use of individual reason can the social habit be developed in " right " directions.

If at the more difficult obstacles on the way a policeman must be placed, then all the motorists must have a right to stop and decide which policeman they will appoint and what he must be appointed to do. Provided they do not actually run into one another, all motorists must have a right to take their own short-cuts round obstacles, and, if a large number insist on going over precipices, instead of barriers being put up at danger-points the chief safeguard must be education of all motorists in the geology which leads to precipices. Meanwhile local landowners who do not wish to have traffic interfering with their private view are allowed to put up innumerable misleading notices and signposts leading directly to impassable bogs and wrong turnings. In this way the dignity of human reason is upheld greatly to the disadvantage of social evolution. The trouble is that though everyone will agree that the results in this fable are lamentable, nobody will agree as to the lessons it teaches about reality. Let us consider the matter as a biological problem.

Man possesses his reasoning faculty in common with the higher animals, but in them it is in so rudimentary a state that there is nothing to be learned from other

## REASON AND SOCIAL HABIT

animals as to how man should think. It is very different with the social habit. Here man is a mere infant compared with several other types of life. He can learn a good deal about his future experiences with the social habit and what they will do to him by considering what has already happened to animals with far more social experience than his own.

Social behaviour is a matter of practice, or as we say, tradition. It is learned by the same process as that whereby water wears away a stone, that is, by repetition. The oftener an animal and its ancestors have repeated a given mode of behaviour the more proficient they become in it, and the better, other things being equal, will their ultimate performance be.

Even in the narrow field of human social custom we find the truth of this ; for it is certainly easier for a man to be civilized in London, Paris, New England or Virginia than in New York, Chicago, Moscow or Johannesburg. But apart from this our physical life illustrates the same principle. We breathe, our hearts beat, our eyes blink, without need of education or thought, because generations of our ancestors have given us infinite practice ; but we still have to learn to speak, since speech is a very recent achievement of our race.

Now the social habit is not a thing that we can make in any way we choose by sitting round a table and taking thought, any more than we can add a cubit to our stature by the same method. It grows and changes in exactly the same way as any other function of evolving life. Let us consider an analogous example : birds have wings and fly ; their wings are modified by the needs of their environment and no bird can deliberately choose the way in which its descendants' wings shall grow. When the ancestors of the penguins found

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

themselves on the shores of the Antarctic sea, they could not say : " Well, here we are in a place where the only food is fish, so that we must not stir from the water's edge ; but we will retain our powers of flight to the full, because the Aurora must be magnificent from a height of five thousand feet." If they had been able to say that, they would have failed to adapt their wings for swimming and diving and would have become extinct. Instead, the inexorable laws of nature ground their wings into paddles so that there they are to-day as we know them, pompous little monarchs of the world of ice.

Exactly the same is true of the social habit in the case of man. We cannot modify it and direct its evolution to suit our own sense of fitness ; it will develop according to the inexorable laws of nature into a useful tool, or we shall disappear from the struggle for existence. It is not possible, for example, for an Englishman to say : " Really twentieth-century upper class life is so picturesque, what with men in stiff shirts and full evening dress, and ladies in dresses that require a maid to do them up, that we simply must retain our class system and production for profit, whatever those Russians may do." We may be able to retain our class system, but if so, it will be for a different reason, namely because it may turn out to be more efficient than a non-class system in the struggle for existence. But if we have entered an arctic circle of economic difficulty, wherein we cannot afford pretty extravagances, we shall not be able to hang on to our tails, any more than the ape could hang on to his, when in the course of evolution he abandoned the trees for terra firma. And if man, using this phantom of a choice which only philosophers know how to define, unlike the penguin with no phantom of a choice, inter-

feres with the natural evolution of the social habit, then he will become extinct.

Infinite numbers of penguin ancestors died because they could not adapt themselves to a frozen world, because, as it were, they thought it unbirdlike to use their wings for swimming. If Communism or Fascism prove to be inevitable stages of the evolution of the social habit, it will be most unfortunate for anyone who opposes them on the ground that they are un-English.

No ; whatever may happen to a few tradition-ridden individuals, the human race as a whole will develop socially in accordance with the inexorable laws of nature. That is, the social habit will become a more and more efficient tool. If it is not altogether efficient at present, that is because mankind has had comparatively little experience. If its increasing efficiency gets in the way of art or music or religion or learning, that will be so much the worse for the few individuals to whom these mean anything at all.

The human race will not develop the efficiency of the social habit for any other purpose than that of simple survival, and it will not be the human reason that fashions the tool but rather the demands of external forces. But luckily we do not have to guess or to prophesy about the main features of this development ; we have only to study the more experienced social animals. To learn of man's future we must go to the ant.

While mankind has experienced the social habit for a thousand generations, there have been at least ten or twenty million generations of social experience for the ant. Thus ants have had at least twenty thousand times as much practice in being a social animal, with



all that it implies for the modification of the individual, as man has had.

Throughout most of this social career the ant has lived in a stable environment that has permitted a continuity of development quite unknown to man. This we know because the bodies of ants preserved in amber for millions of years show the same modifications of structure to the demands of the social habit as are to be seen in living ants.

That is why the ant builds its community, guards it, feeds it, divides the labours and rewards of maintaining it, with as little need of conscious thought or decision as we men require for breathing or the beating of our hearts. Twenty million generations of repetition have ground the whole complex of social relations into a series of reflex actions. The ant community works like clockwork : no debate, no argument, no party politics and partial views—simply a smooth response to the demands of an unchanging environment.

Of course this smoothness did not evolve out of the chaos of a thinking ant democracy. There never was a time when ants reasoned about their social needs ; fortuitous variations of behaviour proved valuable and survived. Mistakes meant annihilation and so the right answers prevailed.

Now the ant does not think, because it never could think ; but if it could and did think, would its efficiency as a social being be in any way increased ? Would it be doing a better job of surviving, if reason had been added to its other faculties ?

And if man had had twenty thousand times the experience of the social habit that he has had, would he find it necessary or advantageous to think, to reason, to argue about all the details of social life that come naturally to the wise old ant ?

One question more: When man *has had* twenty thousand times his present experience, *will* he think, reason, argue about these details?

He is a thinking being, but he finds it best not to think about breathing, and when he begins to think about his digestion, he knows that there is something wrong with him; will not this thoughtless attitude be applied also to these other *social* activities?

In short, is not the use of reason in political matters a mere phase of man's social adolescence? In the end will not man use his reason to be a creative being, an artistic being, a speculative being, an epicure, a good sport, but not at all to be a *political being*?

Let us take as an example of the way in which various social animals approach a problem that is clearly fundamental to social life in any circumstances, the housing of the individual. In England the rulers of our large cities are waking up to the necessity of clearing away slums and providing decent dwelling-places for working men and their families. It has taken generations of reasoning and argument. We have asked if paternal government is not harmful to the stamina of the individual; we have even suggested that the horror of the slums is valuable as a breeding-ground of the more manly virtues; we have discussed bitterly the relative merits of private and public enterprise—a philosophical question that has been given precedence over the life-and-death question of human health and happiness. To this very day human individuals are housed with less attention to their needs than the individuals of any other social species of animal. Let us compare this handling of the problem with the behaviour of bees, ants and wasps.

Everybody knows that the bee, thanks to millions of years' practice, has acquired the social virtue of

housing its workers perfectly. No human engineer working with the assistance of mathematical science could produce a better solution to the bee's housing problem than the bee long ago adopted.

The bees' problem is how to house the largest number of individuals in the smallest space with the smallest use of building material and the most economic expenditure of bee-power in the construction. The shape of the bee-cell can be shown to be the perfect engineering solution.

Suppose the bee developed a rational faculty : suppose one bee arose and argued that there was a lot to be said for a pentagonal cell as against the normal hexagonal cell, (he might not state explicitly that the "lot to be said" was that the wax contractor would make a bigger profit, or the piece-worker a bigger wage). Suppose he persuaded the bees by a small majority to build half the hive in pentagons, and the rest in hexagons except for a few circular cells, with a view, for the drones. Where would the bees be? Higher in the scale of evolutionary achievement because they were thinking? No, they would be extinct. The multiplication of socially unprofitable labour would impoverish the hive and it would soon lose out in the struggle for existence. And this would be because the social habit, perfect until then, had been weakened by an access of pernicious reasoning power. Unwritten history would record that a bee-hive once produced a rugged individualist, a social philosopher, but it would do so only to record a verdict of death from natural causes.

It is important to realize that this ability to solve the engineering problem of housing does not inhere in the bee as a bee ; it inheres in the bee as an experienced social being. We can prove this by

examining the habits of another insect which has gone far in perfecting the social habit. The wasp may seem very much like a bee to many people, but it is a vastly different sort of animal, at least as different as a man from an ape. Now just as certain solitary bees at some time in the process of evolution adopted the social habit, so, quite independently, and by a different route, certain solitary wasps became social wasps. We are able to compare the way that solitary wasps go about housing themselves with the way the social wasps do, and we find a significant difference of method.

The solitary wasp builds a group of cells haphazard upon a wall or tree. They are of no special shape or arrangement ; they solve no mathematical problem ; they are not noticeably economic in shape. The social wasp, on the other hand, builds with the same engineering precision as the bee. Why is this ? Not because of anything inherent in the wasp as wasp, but because any animal adopting a social habit is forced by the inexorable laws governing that habit to build properly or to become extinct. It requires neither reason nor a " blind building instinct ". It is the natural effect of " choosing ", or rather being entrapped into, the use of the social habit as a tool in the struggle for existence. If reason stands in the way of the solution of such a problem, far from that raising the dignity of the animal having reason, it will lead inevitably to the extinction of the community tainted with its pernicious working.

We must repeat once more that the transition from the solitary to the social habit was not a step up for the wasp which allowed it to develop the best that was in it ; on the contrary, any highly developed habit that the solitary wasp may have had was discarded ruthlessly if it was useless to the social habit. Thus solitary wasps have the problem of providing fresh food

for their offspring after the adult parents are dead. To solve this they have acquired what anthropomorphists would like to call a minute knowledge of anatomy : they sting their victims in the nerve centres in such a way that though they are paralysed, they are not killed. Thus the wasp grub, long after its parents are dead, finds fresh meat at its mercy.

Now the social wasp is under no such obligation to provide fresh food for the distant future ; what it wants is as much food for the grubs in the nest as soon as possible ; and so it wastes no time with neurology and contents itself with plain butchery. Under the social habit, we might say, the wasp's artistry has degenerated ; but that would be to use a false series of values. It would be a degenerate wasp that retained a skill which, thanks to the social habit, had ceased to have any useful purpose.

Once again we see that the social habit evolves according to its own inexorable laws and in so doing transforms all the individuals that have come under its domination. Sometimes the transformation involves what we may call an enrichment of the faculties of the individual, but just as often it involves an impoverishment.

When we use these words we must remember that the human being, for all that he is a social animal, judges men by a scale of values which does not seem to be that whereby the social habit judges them. It is very possible that the social habit will not think very highly of certain human qualities that to us contain the essential difference between man and lower animals. And if the social habit depreciates these qualities, they will be doomed, as man becomes more fully inured to the social habit.

The facts that we have been considering are bound to modify our ideas as to the probable future history of humanity. We are bound, if we are to be scientific, to see the human reason as a faculty of the individual which is at the mercy of the social habit.

This is of course in direct contradiction to the theological point of view, which sees man's rational soul, not as a tool fashioned for survival as a bird's wing has been fashioned and refashioned, but as the object and justification of man's very existence.

It is true that most of the functions of the human reason could only be carried out by a social animal ; that you could not have a reasonable animal which was not also a social animal ; but we must remember that it is very easy to imagine a social animal that is not a reasoning one.

Moreover, although the social habit has in the past made use of the reason for its own purposes, it is just as capable of discarding it again, when it ceases to have survival value.

We ask ourselves therefore if any light can be thrown on what the social habit may do to the human reason by considering what it has done to other individual faculties in the case of the long-experienced social insects.

If we have accepted the argument thus far we can no longer object to the statement that as far as the social habit is concerned the ant or the bee is far in advance of man ; and we should be willing to add that the possession of reason by either of these would not have been an improvement for their task of survival on the gifts with which evolution has endowed them. We are therefore willing to study them, not as fanciful

wonders of nature, fit for an Æsop or a Maeterlinck, but as our experienced superiors.

The effect of the social habit upon the individual can be summed up in the one phrase—the perfecting of division of labour. The social habit makes it unnecessary for every individual to do everything and, further than this, it interferes with structure, function, and desire until each individual is physically fitted and psychologically desirous of doing only what is required by the interests of the community as a whole.

Thus biological division of labour has worked profound revolutions at more than one stage of life's history. The earliest living beings were single cells of naked protoplasm endowed with an urge to move, to eat, to grow, and finally to split in two so as to accomplish the most primitive reproduction. One single cell performed at this stage all the functions we associate with the idea of life.

Later, many-celled individuals appeared, the dividing halves remained joined together instead of separating to become living beings on their own, and the process was repeated again and again. At once we see a biological division of labour appearing. In the new type of many-celled animal some cells specialized in motion, others in eating, others in protecting the groups of cells as a whole ; and this meant, on the one hand, far greater proficiency in the task they adopted, and on the other a growing incapacity in all the other tasks they no longer needed to do. Thus the economic functioning of the animal as a whole improved at the expense of the general versatility of the parts. Before the well-ordered many-celled animal was perfected by the grinding methods of evolution, there must have been many individuals in which the component cells found it hard to accommodate themselves to a new state of

affairs, but in course of time these fell out through incompetence. Even to-day in the highest animals, and in man himself, a group of cells may lead a rebellion against the authority of the organism as a whole, and begin to reproduce themselves in their own way, and the result is what we call a Cancer. But except for an occasional aberration like a cancerous growth life long ago tackled the problem of multicellular organization with immense success.

Next in various directions quite unconnected with one another a new basis for biological division of labour was exploited ; this was the building up of two separate types, each specializing in certain qualities, and co-operating together to do the work of reproduction.

In its earliest form this method involved the temporary joining of two cells in such a way that their contents were mixed ; when they separated again each half contained a part of both the original cells, and in this way was enriched with some of the qualities which had been imposed on both parents by their varied experiences in the struggle for existence. Thus sexual reproduction is first of all the enrichment of the new individual by a pooling of two lines of tradition. It proved so valuable for survival as to be adopted almost everywhere in creation.

For us the important fact in this sexual division of labour is that it results inevitably in change of physical form and function. A man and a woman are variations from what either would have been if humanity had no sexual division of labour. Though the sexual task is only one of the many performed by any living being, nevertheless sex is not merely of the sexual organs but of the whole body. It is so ingrained in us that we can scarcely think of any other kind of biological division of labour leading to individuals with differenti-



ated bodies. And yet when we examine those animals which have been subjected to the social habit for a very long time we find that male and female is only one of many possible such divisions.

In fact it is very significant that human beings, although they are social animals, are divided into separate physical types along sexual lines. So young are we in our social experience that we are only polymorphous in the way that the cat that walks by itself is polymorphous. Our individual bodies show no modifications from the social functions they have to perform ; for reproduction we are different, but for all our other labours undistinguished one from the other.

With the bees, ants and wasps matters are quite different ; polymorphism is not merely found in the sexual side of life. Individuals are modified and specialized physiologically not only so as to be male and female, but so as to do more efficiently several other tasks required of them by the community.

Above all, in these highly socialized forms of life only a few individuals are needed for reproduction ; the rest must work at quite other tasks. Their bodies therefore are unencumbered with all the paraphernalia needed for sexual functions ; they have neither developed sexual organs nor sexual desires. In the community there are males, or drones, and there are fully developed females, but only a very few ; the great majority of the potential females are socialized to their finger-tips, so to say, into neuter workers.

Now this change is due to the inexorable effect of the social habit upon individuals subjected to it. It has nothing to do with instinct, blind or otherwise, and the possession of reason would not have altered it. It is not due to the fact that ants are not rational, it is

due to the fact that ants are social ; to a cause, that is, which has its effects in ants and men alike. May we not expect something of the same sort to be contained in man's future experience also ? Will not the social habit gradually grind down the human individual into forms more apt for social functions than the two forms, overendowed with sexual and reproductive attributes, into which humanity is divided to-day ?

### 14

Because man is a rational being and the ant is not, our future will not be the same as the ant's past ; but because both man and ant are social beings the two *will* be similar wherever they are conditioned by the social habit.

This means that the individuals in both species must in time be deprived of those attributes which are anti-pathetic to the overbearing social habit.

Because the social habit has not had time to get its fangs well into man's stubborn neck, we still possess attributes which the ant has lost ; it was not blind instinct that deprived the ant of these, and reason will not save them for us. And if reason puts up a resistance to the social habit, the only result may well be that man will become extinct.

In the ant community the social habit has already triumphed over deep-seated individual cravings to such an extent that, for example, only those individuals which are sexually useful to the community are permitted to have either sexual feelings or fully developed sexual organs. There is no sexual activity deleterious to the efficient working of the society as a whole.

Compare this with the social parvenu, man. He has recently socialized more and more women into workers, admitting them to economic slavery on only slightly

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

worse terms than the males ; but in so doing he has left them their sexual organs and desires unchanged. Women have become industrial machines without first being sterilized out of being reproductive machines. No choice or discrimination has been made. We have not sorted out those females who are by nature not fully developed sexually and given them a reasonable outlet as workers ; we have simply pitched the whole sex, potent and impotent, fecund and semi-sterile, into the labour market. All the social and psychological evils coming from a clash between sexual and economic needs are the result.

If we had had the social sense, or, better put, the social experience, of the ant, should we not have begun by making physiological changes first ? A woman working eight hours a day regularly is not in a position to carry out the whole-time job of bearing and feeding infants ; but so long as she has functioning ovaries and uterus she will suffer as a biological machine, if she does not use her elaborate appliances for the task for which they were designed. When we have had the social experience of ants, shall we not make these changes first ? Shall we not avoid the clash between sex and work by making those individuals who are needed by society for work physically free from the economically extravagant hunger for sexual activities ?

The idea is repugnant to most of us : it is completely foreign to the particular sex-myths to which we have been enslaved by tradition and upbringing ; it is indeed both immoral and indecent. But what has that to do with it ? Whereas the subjective ideas as to what is immoral and what is indecent change according to the needs of time and place, the inexorable laws of social development go steadily on.

Can it be denied that a community which was

economic in its expenditure of energy in sexual directions would be more efficient than our own communities to-day, and therefore fitter to survive in the struggle for existence? It might well be a less romantic society than our own; with no place in it for a Don Juan or a Shelley, an Aucassin or a Nicolette, a Clark Gable or a Greta Garbo, nor for the millions whose sexual romanticism has to be satisfied by transference to these literary and screen lovers; but again what has that to do with it? A community which could use the energy at present lavished on carefully sterilized sexual dreaming for the harnessing of the powers of nature and the destruction of all rival human groups would survive, and the rest would become extinct.

Are we not at this very moment entering upon a period of human development when such things as these, far from being Wellsian and Shavian speculations, are becoming the immediate concern of rulers and governments?

Of course the social habit working in a rational being is saved the necessity of waiting wearily through ten million years of trial and error before it can achieve such results as these. The ant community developed neuters out of fertile females by a process of elimination: those communities where such individuals occurred most frequently survived and the others failed to do so. A rational animal on the other hand can achieve the same result with one prick of a hypodermic syringe, or as part of the orthodox child training of a totalitarian state.

It will be perfectly painless. Already we know how to persuade innumerable individuals, born healthy and normal, that a life of privation and a death of horror in a muddy swamp like Passchendaele, is more than tolerable, by inculcating suitable ideas of courage,

glory, patriotism. When society has a more than usually odious task to force upon men it can succeed by getting the priests of the current religion to make special promises for the faithful after death. (That typical war-time lay preacher and professional Christian aide, Horatio Bottomley, announced in *John Bull* during the last war that a special revelation had been vouchsafed to him from God that soldiers killed in the war, on the allied side of course, would go immediately to heaven without having to wait about for the general civilian Day of Judgement.) Even in peace-time people pay heavily for the privilege of courting death in high-speed contests and useless flying exploits. What possible difficulty is there in castrating ninety per cent of all the infants by psychological means? If then we are so successful, when national rivalries require it, in inculcating a lust for death, why should we be less so in uprooting a lust for life? Indeed celibacy, which is after all merely a bungling sort of castration, has been adopted by whole communities more than once in world history simply in the hope of future reward; and when there are sufficient economic openings for eunuchs, they appear in surprising numbers.

Is there any other difficulty beside what some people call a moral sense and others moral prejudice? It is this same moral sense that has built up in a few countries a public opinion against racial prejudice, whether in the form of Jew-baiting or Negro-lynching, and a prejudice against settling all arguments by force and castor-oil; and in the struggle for existence some human societies have succeeded in getting rid of these prejudices already. When social control falls into the hands of those who wish it, and who are alive to its social advantages, we shall see all prejudice against

mass sterilization disappear in the same way. Liberal-minded students in other lands will shake their heads and say that the new tyranny is due to complexes and perversions in the mind of the dictators who order it, but what if that is so ? The social habit is not above using masochism, sadism, blood fetichism, psycho-sexual impotence or any other aberration to achieve its end. That is to say that if, for example, a well-organized nation of sadists is fitter to survive than a fraternity of Tolstoyans, then the future is for the sadists.

If this future sounds too gloomy for the average reader who happens not to be a sadist, let us remember that a well-ordered community will inevitably need a careful assortment of all psychological types, including a generous sprinkling of sadists to conduct its wars of defence. A nation of masochists would be too unpleasant to contemplate, for such a nation would presumably wish to carry on all its wars of defence on its own soil, instead of doing so, as the British and Americans have hitherto succeeded in doing, on the soil of the nations against whom they are defending themselves.

But to this problem we shall return in due course ; we have still much preliminary matter to learn from the ant.

### 15

What the social habit has done to the sexual instinct in ants and what it may do to it in man, when man is a little more developed is not the main question before us at the moment. We are considering reason and the social habit, and sex is only of interest to us for the example it affords of what happens when individual faculties are ground down by the inexorable work-

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

ing of the social habit. We cannot study the effect of that habit upon reason among the ants because the ants have never developed the particular tool called reason ; but if the social habit can so ruthlessly modify a deep-seated individual craving like sex, can it not do as much to the far more superficial desire for the exercise of reason ?

Sex and reason are alike in this, that they both owe their existence to their value in the struggle for survival. They are alike also in that the social habit must modify their value and their nature.

The only difference between an animal using reason as a tool and another is that the grinding-down process of trial and error, with extinction as the price of error, can be speeded up immensely by the use of reason. Applied reason can perform in a moment what it took millions of years for animals with a less dangerous equipment to achieve ; and applied reason can brush aside in a moment the gains of a million years of evolution. It can open the throttle or put on the brakes, but it *must travel the same road*. It is this that we find so hard to believe ; and yet in appreciating the fact lies the comprehension of the future.

Political wisdom consists in the use of reason to speed up the process of evolution, while lost causes are the innumerable attempts to use reason for deflecting man from his biologically proper and inevitable course. Political wisdom will be forced to treat the human reason according to precisely the same laws as we see dominating the effect of the social habit upon that other tool for survival, the sexual instinct.

Among the ants the potentially female individual becomes a neuter because of the work she does in the economy of the nest. Professor Morton Wheeler and other authorities have demonstrated that hard labour

fatigues the female to an extent that leads to the atrophy of her ovaries. Without the tasks to which the individual is assigned, the ovaries would reach maturity and the ant be a functioning female ; but given the hard labour it degenerates sexually into a neuter. It is a simple matter of the distribution through the organs of the body of the products of metabolism. Undoubtedly some individuals will have a greater inborn tendency than others towards atrophy of the ovaries, but the deciding factor is the work done in obedience to the needs of the community.

In short, we find that whereas the solitary animal is organized in terms of male and female, that is of purely sexual division of labour, the fully developed social animal is organized in terms of individuals physiologically suited to their economic status.

If that economic status does not call for the development of sexual capacity, sexual capacity does not develop. Man is still in an intermediate state, not having advanced far enough in the blind evolution of his social habit, nor having rationally faced an obvious necessity, he is content to attempt a social division of labour with the unmodified equipment of a solitary animal.

We must not think, moreover, that this matter of polymorphism, which is the inevitable result of a fully developed social habit, is a mere matter of sexual fertility and sterility. In an ant community we do not simply have a large number of females turned over into workers by starving their ovaries. There are other modifications from which much can be learned.

There are individuals in some types of ant community with very large heads or powerful jaws that take part neither in the sexual labours nor in the industrial activities of the community. You have the



## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

queen ant with her eggs, the drone to fertilize her, the neuter workers, and the military caste, physiologically transformed to possess the necessary weapons of defence and offence in their own bodies. These soldiers are a stable physical type in exactly the same way as a male and a female human being are types. They concern themselves entirely with war, defensive and offensive. As ovaries are useless in warfare theirs are atrophied and instead they have jaws for swords and beetling brows for battering rams.

Sometimes indeed there are in very highly developed ant societies two types of military individuals, a division not unlike our light and heavy infantry. One type acts as a mobile force and is of a lighter build, while the other is by weight and strength more suitable for the strategy of the phalanx. Both types are responses to the inexorable laws of social development in exactly the same way as the two types of our own sexual bimorphism are responses to the need for sexual division of labour. In fact early observers were so used to the idea that polymorphism is sexual that they talked of the worker sex and the soldier sex, when they wished to describe polymorphism as they found it among ants.

Bearing in mind that man's future history will inevitably be marked by the increasing modification of the individual at the hands of a constantly improving social habit, we see the relevance of this ant polymorphism to our study. It is not that men will gradually begin to develop many types instead of the male and the female ; we need not look forward to the birth of big-headed, or legless, or winged individuals ready for their economic niche in society, for the rational animal, man, can do and will do by education and by manipulating his environment much that in other

animals has to be done in the course of millions of years by sexual selection. Nevertheless the fully perfected social habit demands that every individual shall do the work for which it is fitted, that it shall be fitted for that work, and that it shall not desire to do any other work ; and man will have to use his brains to do this just as certainly as millions of years of variation did it for the ant.

If the social habit requires an individual's sexual labours, then that individual is able and desirous of functioning sexually ; if on the other hand there is no social need for that labour, then the individual not only does not function sexually, but is deprived of physiological sexual ability, and therefore of sexual desire.

In short we may say that the ant, being wise socially with many generations of trial and error behind it, has learned the truth that " he who desires but acts not breeds pestilence." Man with less experience of the social habit has not learned this.

The immense social experience of the ants has taught them that you cannot run a community where the individuals are discontented because their social employment leaves some of their organs without a function. It has taught more than this. If the social habit has produced a modified type to perform certain necessary social functions which are only needed at intervals, then it will be dangerous to permit those individuals to exist a moment longer than they are required.

Now as we learned from Cæsar, war is a seasonal occupation. After the campaign one must go into winter quarters. The social experience of the ants has taught them that if you have individuals modified into soldiers you must get rid of them directly the campaign-

ing season is over. In peace-time soldiers are useless mouths to feed ; they take up valuable space ; they get in the way of the workers. It would be too much to suppose that among ants soldiers have those other qualities that among men make them so grave a menace ; ants not being reasonable beings are saved the social peril of military-minded peace-makers ; but the mere economic extravagance of keeping useless soldiers alive has been avoided by certain ants, which have adopted a special social technique to solve the old-soldier problem. In the autumn, when the fighting season is over, temporary employment is found for them as harvest hands ; their powerful heads come in useful to crush the grass seed that forms a large item in the nest's winter food supply. When the harvest has been husked in this way, the workers snip off the heads of the now useless soldiers and drop their remains out of the nest. In this way there is no intolerable burden of a standing army in peace-time.

What stands in the way of such a solution for human beings also ? The need of perhaps twenty years' more biological research and the objections of old-fashioned people like the reader to the march of progress and the coming of a sturdier development of the social habit.

I do not suggest that human societies will ever kill off their soldiers as some ants do, because it takes so much longer for us to produce a new set. But given a little more scientific research and a slightly more ruthless totalitarian state and there will be other ways of achieving the same result. Just as a man can be emasculated by physiological operations, so soldiers will be emilitarated.

It is not enough to read these curious facts about ants as strange wonders of nature. Once more let us emphasize that they are not merely facts about ants :

they are facts about the *social habit*, to which mankind also is committed. The existence of worker and soldier forms, while we have only sexual forms, the treatment of soldiers in the case we have quoted, are examples of how animals behave towards the individuals making up their social unit, when their social experience is far greater than ours. It is not because the ant is an ant that these things happen ; it is not because the ant uses instinct instead of reason ; it is not something that does not concern us because we are “ higher in the evolutionary scale ” ; it is part of the common pathway of all social beings. Every socialized animal—man, insect, bird, or any other—will, after sufficient social experience, be forced to obey certain fundamental laws of social life ; as, that specialized labour requires specialized individuals with modified physical and psychological attributes ; that no community can afford to keep these individuals alive once their use is over.

Primitive man knew this in part ; he realized that as between a tribe burdened with old and infirm men and another which killed them off, there could be only one result of the struggle for existence ; the problem still remains in a modified form. Nobody, as we have said, imagines that mankind will regularly kill off its armies when peace comes ; but those who remember the Great War will have no difficulty in seeing how a well-organized human society which can turn peaceful peasants, mild bank clerks, flannelled fools at the wicket and muddled oafs at the goal into bloodthirsty warriors, will also, with greater experience, turn them back to their specialized civilian tasks by demobilizing their endocrines and conditioned reflexes.

We have already advanced some distance along this road ; what we have still to learn from the ants is the danger of leaving the soldiers in control when it comes

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

to making peace ; or rather the military-minded civilians, who have not had their sadism discharged in action upon the battlefield and are therefore anxious to make peace with a poisoned pen. We are not suffering to-day so much from Passchendaele and Ypres as we are from Versailles. Here we must take our hats off to the ants. A hundred years hence Lord Dawson of Penn's successor will run at Lloyd George's successor with a hypodermic syringe the moment that the successor of the last war to end war is over ; and then perhaps we may get a peace that shall not be a peace to end peace.

We cannot resist one final example of the social habit at its best : among certain ants, when there is no fighting to be done, the soldier ant is used as a living door. The exit from the nest is closed with his head, and since this head is large it is admirably fitted for the task.

When a small worker wants to get by, it strokes the soldier's abdomen, and at once the door swings back and, after the worker has passed, it closes to again. Later a judicious tapping on the head opens the door to the returned wanderer.

This arrangement is possible because the ex-soldier is so delighted by the strokings and tappings that it feels itself amply rewarded. Unlike a human member of the Corps of Commissionaires it never grows discontented dreaming of battles long ago. Unlike Bottom it does not want to be Pyramus, Thisby, Lion or Wall, but just Door and Door only.

Thus again we see that sooner or later the Social Habit requires that every individual shall be useful and contented in his job, desiring no other ; and that this can be brought about only by incapacitating him for any other job. With men such a state of affairs

will be possible only in the totalitarian state ; and since a society organized on these principles will be inevitably better equipped for the struggle for existence than any other, we can make certain guesses at man's probable future from this alone.

## 16

Thus the behaviour of man and of the other animals, and all that we know of the inevitable laws of evolution, and especially of the social habit in evolution, lead us to face the future from a point of view quite different from the one encouraged by our traditions. The lord of creation and heir of all the ages does well to be humble, for he must toe the line ; he cannot make the laws by which he must be ruled. He must stop worshipping his reason and see it as a tool ground out by external forces in the struggle for existence. He must see that though he has made many forms of political society, he is fundamentally the slave of the social habit. As an individual he must admit that he is as powerless before it as is the individual ant. It is very hard for him to do this.

No one would deny that, as things are, man is dependent on the existence of oxygen in the air ; or that if this dependence did not exist he would be different in body and in mind—a different system of metabolism and therefore different thoughts. In the same way it is futile to deny that man is dependent on the social habit ; or that but for this dependence his body and mind would be different. Man did not put the oxygen in the air, he cannot control its effect upon him, he cannot decide that it shall have effects different from those which are natural to the interdependence between his metabolism and the gas he breathes. Man did not invent the social habit, he cannot control its effect upon

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

him, he cannot decide that it shall have effects different from those which are natural to the interdependence of individual functions and the needs of the social *milieu* controlling them.

All that we know of evolution leads us to suppose that the human social habit is bound to be more and more typical of the social habit anywhere the longer it has had to develop. At present man, a social parvenu, is only at the beginning of this development ; he reacts for the most part like a solitary animal.

Moreover, many of his most typical and satisfactory achievements have been produced by faculties exercised in a way which is antipathetic to the social habit in its more perfect forms. Man prides himself, and with reason, upon his rugged individualism ; with less reason he hopes to remain ruggedly individual. It is this that has produced in our generation so formidable a resistance to the inevitable ; so strong a distaste for the obvious future ; so lively a sense of discomfort and defeat ; so passionate a desire to escape from reality along the short-cuts of fallacious day-dreams.

We have so far dealt in generalities and concentrated upon facts that should lead to a reasonable point of view towards the future. It is time now to apply these to the passing show. Let us correct, however, one probable misconception to which some portion of our argument may have laid us open.

The reader may well have asked himself what use there can be in human life at all if, as seems implied by all this, the reason is doomed. What is this unseen, unfeeling, metaphysical thing, society, or the social habit, to which individual faculties, nay all human dignity, must at last be sacrificed ? If man is doomed to become an ant, what does anything matter ? Let us eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow we enter death

in life. Let the reader be patient. The annihilation of the individual may come as a stage in the future, but it is not the last act. Man will be forced to learn how to use his reason without outraging the demands of the social habit ; but even when he has done this he will only have mastered the mere mechanics of living, so that the art of living may become a reality. For because reason daily outrages the social habit there is no art of living to-day.

Consider the case of the highly civilized community living within the British Isles ; consider how it is governed. A group of sane, well-educated, well-meaning gentlemen—Mr. Baldwin, Mr. Eden, Mr. Chamberlain and the rest—are straining every nerve and probably having genuine sleepless nights trying to achieve—what ? The salvation of a social and political system which violates at every turn the minimum requirements of the social habit, and fails to reach the first and least objective for which man in the course of evolution gave up the freedom of solitary existence for the chains worn by any social animal.

It is not that modern civilization is unjust in its economic inequalities ; not that it is ugly or cramping to the soul, or that it deprives many of opportunity so that there shall be no infringements of the privileges of the few. The trouble need not be stated in any such general and ambiguous terms. It can be stated much more simply.

The efforts of our sane rulers are devoted to trying to work a system which gives less certainty that everyone will have the necessities of life than there is in the most primitive and savage communities. A primitive hunting tribe on the Amazon or in the Arctic Circle is more certain of the primary necessities of life than are the civilized citizens of Western Europe and America.



Very few Esquimaux hunters have to give up relying on their own talents to support themselves and their families and throw themselves on the grudging charity of their society. But in the United States twenty million have to do so ; in England there are sometimes more than two million skilled and strong men and women who cannot be used ; and in all other countries under the system it is the same.

What is this system ? This is not the place to describe it in any detail : let us simply repeat that it is a system in which the legality of Sir John Simon, the honesty of Mr. Baldwin, the sanity of Mr. Eden busily try to make sense out of this paragraph :

#### WHEAT : IMPROVED OUTLOOK

Natural causes have again improved the wheat position, when schemes for the artificial raising of prices failed. In 1934 the drought in the United States assisted producers to obtain more remunerative prices, and in 1935 *adverse weather conditions in Argentina resulted in a further improvement in the world wheat situation.*

Let the reader forget all political war cries, let him forget the words capitalism and socialism, let him consider man as an animal organized for victory in the struggle for existence, and then let him re-read that paragraph. Is it remotely possible that any social animal can possibly survive if its social organization demands plague, flood, drought and natural disasters so that it shall work ; if its farmers are forced to pray for bad weather that they may live ?

If a rival society of human animals abandons so farcical a method of providing a living for its individual members, and learns to live by conserving the fruits of the earth instead of artificially destroying them when nature is too bountiful, will it not inevitably destroy the others in the struggle for survival ? Yet all our

## REASON AND SOCIAL HABIT

sane, well-educated, well-meaning rulers are subscribing to that paragraph and its implication as if it were not the epitome of stupidity. Here are some more paragraphs from the same unimpeachable source :

### BUSINESS IN CANADA RESTORED TO LEVEL OF 1925

One of the healthiest developments was the relative improvement in the position of the farming community. It is true that a plague of redstem rust brought down Canada's total wheat yield to 273 million bushels. . . . The shortness of the Argentine crop promises to open up for Canada an opportunity of disposing of the unwieldy carry-over of wheat which has been depressing the world market.

### HUNGARY

The harvest in 1935 was below average, but the effect of this was neutralized by higher prices.

### SPAIN : A BAD YEAR FOR INDUSTRY

While many went hungry, wheat was in such abundance from the record crop of the previous year that it could only be sold at a loss.

Poor crops in Hungary are better on the whole than good crops in Spain. Picture those gaunt Castilian hillsides where every blade has to push aside a stone if it is to grow. Nature for once turned her more genial cheek and rewarded the peasant's sweat with the bitter bread of a good harvest, which leads to empty stomachs in our modern economic madness.

But natural causes, we read, in 1935 again improved the wheat situation by giving mankind the generous gift of foul weather in the Argentine. In the article, "Argentine, Drought Disastrous to Crops", we read the details of the destroying angel who made 1935 better for us all :

During June, July and August the drought grew steadily worse, and in September a major disaster threatened. At

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

the end of September and the beginning of October steady rain fell generally over the stricken growing areas, and the drought was over ; but it was too late to save the wheat. . . . On December 12 the basic price of wheat which had remained at 5.75 pesos per 100 kilos since 1933 was unexpectedly raised by decree to 10. The decree stated that apart from reduced sowings losses had been incurred through persistent drought and locusts

—but nevertheless all this led to *an improved wheat situation.*

At the present moment mankind is organized into societies which have to rely on the plagues of Egypt for continued existence ; which teach their individuals to lay up profits in the good lean years for the bad fat years are bound to come ; which, if their churches kept up to date, would pray on Sundays for bad weather lest a plentiful harvest bring disaster.

And it is not wheat alone that is treated thus ; the minor fruits of the harvest have to be destroyed as well :

### INDIA

Restriction schemes in the case of tea and jute . . . are among the factors that have brought renewed confidence into the country-side.

### BRITISH MALAYA

Rubber and tin play so important a part in the economic life of British Malaya that the fortunes of the whole country are dependent on the success or failure of the steps now being taken to improve the position of those two commodities by the curtailment of supplies. Both restriction schemes have been moderately successful.

### RUBBER : WORLD STOCKS REDUCED

Various difficulties in connexion with the International Rubber Regulation Agreement have arisen and are not yet completely solved. . . . During the year it is estimated

## REASON AND SOCIAL HABIT

that world stocks were reduced by 100,000 tons. This result was *achieved* in spite of . . .

### BRAZIL

Broadly speaking, the coffee situation in Brazil tended to improve . . . (owing to) . . . drought in the growing areas.

In all this astonishing destruction mania to which sane, well-educated, well-meaning economics boils down, it is at first a pleasant surprise to read about Egypt, but the sting is in the tail of the following quotation :

### EGYPT: HIGHEST COTTON PRICES SINCE 1931

Egypt is definitely on the upward grade. . . . At the end of the year the cotton situation was excellent. The crop was plentiful . . . unusual demand. . . . *Italy alone purchased 520,000 kantars in the last week of October.*

In fact the one exception wherein man was able to stand the shock of nature's bounty was largely caused by preparations for war. Man can still find a use for a good harvest if he is going to kill his fellow man.

Those are the cold facts : there is no Moscow propaganda about them. In every direction this ludicrous system is being bolstered up by the sane, well-educated, well-meaning capitalist governors of the world. They are not succeeding in the task they are attempting, because all the skill of even a rational animal cannot outrage the inexorable common sense of the social habit. Trade agreements, economic pacts, political alliances, armaments solely for defence, international banking agreements, immigration, gold standards, currency manipulation, national governments, new deals, national planning—none of them can succeed in maintaining a system of life in which the paragraphs we have quoted are deemed to make sense.

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

If anyone wishes to find a clue to lead him through the next twenty years of this Epoch of Stupidity let him forget all political alliances and balances of power, all political leaders Hitler, Roosevelt, Baldwin, Mussolini ; let him ponder on man's present relationship to his food supply, and let him remember that the whole of evolution is a process in which those individual animals or those groups of social animals which best solve the problem of getting food with least expenditure of effort and greatest sense of security *win*, while the others become extinct. The time has passed when man's reason and ingenuity permitted him to be a fool and wasteful ; by his very creation of plenty man has brought upon himself a time of scarcity. How will he solve the paradox ? Or rather what will unalterable law demand of an animal that has, by the use of a tool called reason, got his working of the social habit into such a fantastic mess ?

Suppose an English Prime Minister or an American President were to address their bodies of elected countrymen and say : " Man is a social animal struggling like every other animal to survive in a ruthless struggle for existence. He can only succeed by obeying the rules. One of those rules is that he should use the resources of nature sanely and economically. This rule he flouts. He is therefore doomed directly some other community does better than we are doing. Let us therefore carry out an economic and political programme which starts right in our relationships with nature and her laws. We will no longer ask the farmer to pray for bad weather ; we will no longer breed poverty from plenty ; we will no longer demand destruction of natural wealth so as to bring a false wealth. We will do this and this to set ourselves right with inexorable law." What would happen ? A thou-

## REASON AND SOCIAL HABIT

sand vested interests playing upon a million human prejudices would prevent the necessary reforms.

In short, reason would fail to solve the problem and the solution would be left to other forces, blinder, more ruthless, more full of pain, but better servants of evolution in the long run. That has happened before in human history ; it will happen again.

## CHAPTER IV

### IS IT WAR ?

17

**I**S it surprising that a system that has turned the fertility of earth into a destroying angel should see sprawling across the threshold of its future the uneasy dragon of war ?

Before we prophesy that there will or will not be war in the next few years let us take a cold-blooded look at this thing called peace.

It does not matter where we begin our scrutiny, for its design is a recurring pattern of absurdity ; but let us look at that vast stretch of humanity, the Middle West of America, a district far away from the welter of traditional rivalries which most people think of as the chief causes of war ; the home, surely, of peace and stable hopes.

Far away from the uneasy waters of the Rhine, the Mississippi flows between golden acres of wheat and corn. Vast populations escaped there from the rage of empires and the handcuffs of privilege to become free and fruitful American farmers. Is it Arcadia on the banks of this new and vaster Nile ?

In Chicago the speculators buy the still unripe corn ; then they sit down and hope for every kind of natural disaster. If their god answers their prayers, the rain does not fall in due season and the price goes up. Profits are made, and out of the barren ground even the

## IS IT WAR?

farmer may be able to get enough to feed himself and his family; if the ground is not so barren he too will starve in the midst of a glut.

But it is in the city that the greatest gains come from the country's barrenness. Civic pride and virtue flourish, more tickets are bought for the Opera; the symphony concerts are better supported; and they may even pay the teachers part of their arrears of salary.

If the benign malignancy of nature does not put a stop to the devastating fertility of man's scientific farming, then things go to pieces. The government has to pay the farmer to plough his crops under, and to kill his pigs. In the city the teachers are not paid, Wagner and Tschaikowsky are silent in the land, and strong business men, unable to meet the expenses of Florida estates, jump in despair from the higher floors of the larger hotels. And on the land itself the farmer and his children die by inches of deficiency diseases. Midas starved since all he touched turned to gold; the American farmer starves because he cannot turn his abundant grain into dollar bills.

The farmer can try to help himself in one way: he can refuse to pay his rent and his mortgage interest and dig himself in and wait. Years before, when money had a different value and no one imagined that the future could contain anything but a fantastic prosperity, the city folk had generously helped him to buy his land, at what then seemed a comfortable mortgage interest. It was largely this that led to the beautifying of the Chicago lake-side, to the acquisition of Old Masters from effete and rotten Europe, to the multiplication of school buildings where now and then even the human element is paid. All these things are the price paid by the farmer for



the privilege of buying land on mortgage in the days of plenty.

The farmer goes to town ; he sees vaguely the residential quarters of the big cities, and realizes that they grew from the furrows he ploughs ; he may realize too that he is supporting the strange civilization of Southern California, enjoyed by the men who, having sold him his land on reasonable rates of interest in 1920, are now wallowing in Hollywood amid sun, stars and new religions. And on his journey back from the big city to his farm, looking at the unending cultivable fields that pass the window, he puts his hand into his pocket to pay the bill for his Pullman dinner ; and to do so must hand over the profits on several acres of wheat.

That is what peace means in what should be the most successful quarter of the world from the point of view of human civilization. Taking up the thread at this point and unravelling the whole pattern of the world to-day, you will be able to go in all directions and find bitter and dangerous implications.

Forget political alignments and battle-cries and think only of man as a social animal which orders its dealings with nature in this manner. Then consider what would happen to a society organized on these lines if it found itself struggling for existence with another society, organized on any basis which gave the farmer a return in proportion to the work he did and the increase of his fields, rather than in proportion to his ill-success in producing anything.

Suppose, for example, that the first charge on the farmer's pocket was not the maintaining *in perpetuo* of the mortgage holders in the cities. Suppose that there was, on the one hand, a single social organism in which a bushel of wheat had no money charges, interest on

## IS IT WAR?

debt, or rent to pay before it could show a return in food and clothes to the man who produced it, and on the other, a social organism in which, as at present in America, all these charges had to be met first. Which of the two social organisms, other things being equal, would be fittest to survive?

Is this not exactly the same problem as would have arisen between two wasp nests, one of which built hexagonal cells and the other cells of all shapes and sizes?

There is one difference; with the wasps, the less fit organism would have died out and left no trace; with man, the individuals of the less well-organized group can learn from the other group and force a change upon their own. And that is one of the most significant characteristics of this time of peace through which we are now passing: in every human society there are individuals awake to the need of destroying their present social organization if common sense and their own personal interests are not to continue to be outraged.

Thus, the farmers can already see that, when other things are equal, the Russian farmer will be able to undersell the whole of the rest of the world, because he has no money and land charges to deduct before his bushel of wheat can be translated into food and clothes for himself. Of course other things are *not* equal. The Russian farmer is not allowed by his community to reap the immediate benefits that could arise from this state of affairs. Instead, they are being used to build up an unassailable military force to protect in the face of a hostile world the system that makes it possible. But the object-lesson is there. It does not matter that the Russian peasant is no better off than the mid-western farmer; it does not matter that in both cases society steals from the farmer a high per-

centage of the product of his labour. What does matter is that in one case the part stolen is being wasted in socially useless ways, while in the other it is being used to strengthen society.

Instead of maintaining queer religions in Los Angeles and beautifying a Lake Front he is not likely to see very often, the farmer in Russia is being forced to work, unwillingly perhaps, to strengthen his social organism for the struggle for existence. The farmer in America is forced to work, unwittingly perhaps, to increase the charm, or to embellish the escapes from reality, of a relatively few individuals. The small part of every man that is truly social cannot help vibrating in sympathy with the Russian method rather than with the American.

But we may leave a judgement between the lot of the Russian and the American farmer to-day to the private tastes of the reader, for it is not the important part of our argument at this point. What is important is that we note that a first glance at this thing called peace reveals a war between the interests of the town and the country. All that is most typical of our civilization is a product of the town, so much so that we forget that agriculture is the basic industry of all the nations of the earth. Can there be peace so long as this essential of social life is organized on fantastic falsehood? Read once more the paragraphs we quoted in the last chapter and then remember that all the farmers in the world live in a state of semi-starvation, that whether the harvest is good or bad makes very little difference to them. "Farmers always grumble" you are told. Is it very surprising? And if those in whose hands, whether they realize it or not, the mere existence of the city dweller lies, are rightfully discontented, is it possible to imagine that things can go

## IS IT WAR?

on quietly getting worse? You who live in New York or in Chicago or Minneapolis, you do not need to look across the Atlantic or the Pacific Oceans for disturbers of your peace; you will find them much nearer home among the men who are learning that an empty barn is no worse than a full one, that a drought is no more to be feared than the fertilizing rain, that money and mortgages have nourished to a gigantic size the greatest and oldest of social evils, absentee landlordism. These men will never read Marx or Lenin; there will be no need; they have only to reap the bitter thoughts that must come of such insensate sowing.

### 18

Our peace, then, is built upon the grievances of the country against the town. Man, an animal bound by the unalterable laws of the struggle for survival, builds his gallant skyscrapers on fields sown with the seeds of disaster.

It is important to remember this, because most social philosophies, conservative or revolutionary, being made by town-dwellers are apt to pass it over. The rebel sees a hundred thousand unemployed in the city streets and the rows of rat-holes in which they live; he does not see the silent peasant engulfed in wide acres and keeping lonely company with the hookworm and deficient diet. He is used to strike-pickets and bread-lines, and is apt to be astonished when in a fit of exasperation a group of farmers dump a few thousand gallons of milk by the roadside, because their profits have been drained away by middlemen and by all the hangers-on of city marketing. We minimize the problems of the country because life seems to run so much more richly and significantly in the town; but we forget that the life of the town

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

is kept going by incessant blood transfusions from the blighted acres outside.

If man were still in a purely agricultural state our picture would be complete already. We could sum up his practice of the social habit in a few scornful generalizations about the way he wastes the bounty of nature. Our peace would not consist of armed nations fighting one another with economic weapons and employing their spare time promising not to exchange those weapons for gas and high explosive until they feel quite sure of winning with them.

In the early years of the war, while they were preparing to render intellectual assistance to the bandits of Versailles, university historians wrote many pamphlets explaining exactly what they thought they meant by the words nation, nationality, race, state. They multiplied definitions and obscured counsel. And they kept alive the union between two different things that has caused as much suffering as any other association of ideas.

There is, first, the natural love and preference a man has for the surroundings among which he was born, or fell in love ; the people who speak the same language, with whom he has played and laughed and worked ; the prejudices and conventions which make up their life together. All this is a man's country. He likes it best, just as he prefers his own house to the houses next door.

Second, there is an economic business concern competing with other concerns and trying to make larger profits than they. This is also called a man's country, and since nobody who did not carry his heart in his purse could love it, its promoters have done all they can to confuse it with the first country in men's minds. This country which spends its time waging

## IS IT WAR?

economic war with tariffs and quotas and currency restrictions and gold standard manipulations, while it prepares poison gas, bombing aeroplanes, submarines and machine guns purely for defence, is the one for love of which men are asked to lay down their lives. They are stupid enough to do so, because it has been confused in their minds with the first country, for which it can never be necessary to lay down one's life since it can give no cause for enmity.

Why did this second country come into existence? Peasants would never have thought of organizing it. They fought for religious ideas, for dynasties, for more pasturage when Asia dried up; but the modern nation is not their creation. The modern nation exists because in our modern economic life we can only maintain our general standard of living at the expense of someone else.

Whence came all the loveliness of England? The fine libraries, the picture galleries, the well-paved streets, the Oxford accent, the cosmopolitan good manners, political good breeding, royal pomp, Goodwood, Ascot, Lord's, Ranelagh, Wimbledon, and the Lord Mayor's Show?—those oases of picturesque leisure in the wilderness of the Black Country and the Distressed Areas? They are the product of three things, all of which are now coming to an end.

They came first from a system whereby if a coal miner, an electrical engineer, a ship's captain, or a shop girl produced by their labour twenty shillings' worth of real wealth, an unseen hand dipped down and took five shillings' worth away from the producer, who had to be content with fifteen shillings only. It is called the lawful earnings of capital, this five shillings, and much of it is used for excellent purposes. Out of it a great deal of the beauty of England had blos-

somed. Stump orators will tell you that this five shillings, which ought to have remained in the pocket of the worker who produced it by his labours, is spent on luxury cigars, fur coats and worse by the bloated capitalist. That may or may not be so, but it is altogether beside the point. What is really important is that a time has come when the effect of those accumulated five shillingses is destroying the whole complicated structure of our society and bringing about a state of affairs where there is no longer either fifteen shillings for the worker or five for the unseen hand. But it takes long books to show how this works out and we can only mention it in passing here.

The second thing that has broken down is the assumption that if the worker was given religious, intellectual and political freedom, he would still be content with a position of economic inferiority.

The net result of nineteenth-century liberalism is that though the worker, thanks to the social conscience of the leisured classes, may attend lectures on Plato and Aristotle, may vote and for the bread of the spirit may go to a nonconformist chapel or even a rationalist church, he must gain his daily bread by working with tools belonging to someone else, who therefore controls the conditions under which he must labour. For we must never forget that he who owns the tools in your hands owns you as much as if he owned your hands themselves. As things have worked out, this means that the worker is politically free only so long as he does not try to change the ownership of his tools ; he is intellectually free except that he is not taught the significance of the ownership of tools ; and he is spiritually free only within the values set up by the economic system under which he must live.

## IS IT WAR?

When in 1870 Education became universal in England, the object its proposers had in mind was to produce a more skilful and therefore more lucrative working class and to see that the two-edged tool of education should never be used to persuade the worker to vote the wrong way. So long as the town worker could be educated to believe that his interests were the same as those of the industrial capitalist, it did not matter that the tory landowners could whip up the support of their agricultural labourers to wage war on liberalism ; nor that the enfranchised professional and *rentier* middle-class, snobs to a man, would feel that they brought themselves nearer the upper classes by voting conservative, just as they regarded going to chapel instead of to church as a dangerous plunge towards the lower orders.

For a very long time the liberal theory worked, and even to-day, with a powerful socialist class and hardly a liberal left, it is working. For the socialist party to-day is carrying on the great liberal tradition that so long as the capitalist is forced to be "just" it does not matter who owns the tools of industry.

And the ideal of education invented in the heat of the industrial revolution is still fairly successful, for the worker never votes for his own party when things are going well, so that there can only be a government willing to spend on the worker when there is nothing in the exchequer to spend. A reactionary government cuts wages or social services, conditions get worse, a socialist government is returned and cannot restore the cuts because of the worse conditions. Thus socialism is discredited and public opinion persuaded to maintain the system for lack of a better.

But this state of affairs cannot go on for ever. Not that it is being brought to an end by good counsel



and sweet reasonableness: it is being ended by the logic of events. We have reached a stage now, when all that is needed to destroy it is a greater success, real or apparent, of some other system. Democracy, with its share-the-classics-but-not-the-tools policy, has been destroyed in three countries by revolution. In Germany and Italy they have withdrawn the sharing of the classics part of the programme and substituted a state-mother-orgiastic religion, and in Russia they are trying to share the tools. All three experiments may be wrong, but they are appealing more to the people than the compromising democratic idea, and therefore they are, for the moment, able to create that solid enthusiasm which is the first essential for winning the struggle for survival.

The third contributor to the beauty of England is Imperialism; the policy of approaching the rest of the world with a Bible in one hand and a bag of beads in the other, and a revolver in your belt.

There is not a single piece of graceful living in our island that is not in part the result of some black, brown or yellow man being persuaded to part with something of value for something almost worthless.

It is true that we have salved our consciences by giving most of them the chance of membership not merely of the kingdom of heaven but of the British Empire; and there are many British colonels whose sense of the proprieties is so strong that they are horrified at any suggestion of surrendering those loyal British citizens the Masai and the Banyankole to a foreign flag in any redistribution of colonial opportunities. We have done our best for the millions whose land and raw materials we have taken; we have not only given them beads but pills also, and consecrated bread, whisky and sacramental wine. And

## IS IT WAR?

yet, such is the ingratitude of human nature, we are no longer thanked for all we have done.

Gradually the rest of the world is refusing to regard itself as either a market or a treasure-chest to be exploited by Western Europe and its cleverer imitator the U.S.A. Some parts of the world, Japan for instance, actually insist on producing instead of merely absorbing, on beating us in fact at our own game. In consequence the industrial wealth of Britain, based on the willingness of the rest of the world to absorb goods, has been menaced by rivals and by the growth of industrial production among those who were hitherto satisfied with being "backward countries", that is, markets for our goods.

Whether you consider the highly technical matter of the collapse of capitalist economics owing to faults in its structure, or the growing discontent of the worker with his slavery to the man who owns the tools with which he must work or starve, or the collapse of the world conditions upon which European exploitation rested, you will see that this peace that we are maintaining with such uneasy minds is bound to be stormy in itself. It is all that the governments of the world can do to maintain the system to which they are committed in peace-time. How would they fare in war?

In peace-time a continuous and increasingly bitter economic battle has to be carried on between every nation in an attempt to maintain its standard of living above the level at which revolt must set in. Economic mobilization occupies the minds of dictators and democracies alike. Astonishing ingenuity is shown in the desperate hope of fulfilling a government's first duty of self-preservation by preventing its destruction by hunger-maddened men. Suppose these govern-

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

ments, failing in their use of economic weapons, resorted to military, aerial and naval weapons of destruction ; what would happen ? We have taken a glance at the nature of the peace we have ; let us now take a glance at the war we should get.

### 19

We will now make our first prophecy about the future. It is this :

#### PROPHECY NO. I

WAR IS ULTIMATELY INEVITABLE. IT WILL BE FOUGHT BY ARMIES UNABLE TO PROTECT CIVILIAN POPULATIONS, AGAINST WHICH, FROM THE VERY FIRST MOMENT, ALL EFFORTS OF THE ATTACKERS WILL BE AIMED. IT WILL BE SHORT AND INVOLVE INEVITABLY THE DESTRUCTION OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF BOTH VICTORS AND VANQUISHED, IF THEY CAN BE SHOWN EITHER TO HAVE PROMOTED IT, OR TO HAVE BEEN CRIMINALLY NEGLIGENT IN NOT PREVENTING IT.

The classic theory of war can be briefly stated : two armies oppose one another in an attempt to protect their own civilian population and to menace the other's. When either army can no longer protect its civilian population the war is over. Any other theory of war is meaningless, at least between civilized opponents. Of course you can have a war of extermination carried on between Italians and Abyssinians, and in the heat of war fever people may talk of the necessity, for example, of "bleeding Germany white". But in the modern economic world we do not want to rule our conquered enemies. We want to trade with them on terms advantageous to ourselves, so that the less

## IS IT WAR?

damage to their civil structure we have to impose the better we are, or ought to be, pleased. And even in war madness, sooner or later selfish considerations reassert themselves.

Suppose a war broke out between the same groups of allied nations as in 1914. As I write a great many people have persuaded themselves that this will happen. Indeed we are not at war to-day because the German word *alsbald* turns out not to mean what the translators thought it meant at first; and the question of war next week depends on what Hitler and the French decide about the English word *symbolical*; for such are the realities of the situation through the spectacles of post-war *weltpolitik* and diplomacy. Let us play the game, then, and discuss a war between Germany and the Allies as if it were a possibility.

The French decide that there are a hundred thousand symbolical troops in the Rhineland and attack the bridgehead at Cologne; or at least the Germans think they do or say they think so. The truth is never known in the rapidity of events; it will be determined later in a "war guilt" clause interpreted by the victors and imposed on the vanquished at the end of the war, and reversed by the vanquished as soon after as possible.

Whoever started the trouble in this way, and whatever they did, the next step is a broadcast throughout Germany saying that the Fatherland has been outraged, and another broadcast through France saying that La Belle France has been raped; but before the two speeches are ended a blast of interference puts an end to them and to all wireless for the duration of the war. From then on the researches of Clerk Maxwell, Lodge, Marconi, Lee de Forest and the rest will be used for preventing enemy propaganda by the setting up of a continuous ethereal howl.

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

Meanwhile, an anonymous enthusiast of the Croix de Feu will seize the occasion to assassinate M. Léon Blum or M. Herriot ; in Munich a Jew seen releasing a carrier pigeon in the direction of Czecho-Slovakia will be burned alive ; in England certain enthusiastic professors will get down their files of the Oxford historical pamphlets on the War, by way of clearing their decks for action. But none of this will matter. The serious events will be happening up aloft.

In the air at least three nations will send up squadrons of bombers and, for the look of the thing, squadrons of bomber destroyers ; small mechanized armies will be concentrated at the points agreed upon long ago ; the larger naval ships, upon which millions have been spent, being clearly too costly to be endangered, will be rushed to safety in the most out-of-the-way ports available, where their brass can be polished without risk of a dent.

In England, Germany and France three men, dissimilar in every particular save that they are all three smokers, will be lynched by a crowd mad with terror for lighting three matches near three petroleum dumps. Music shops will do a roaring trade in dingy fly-blown forgotten stock of the Marseillaise and even of the Brabançonne, setting aside for sale as waste paper a pile of the Russian national anthem which had been lying with the others ever since 1917.

The clergy will hastily rake out the prayers in war-time, including that sweet one about the horses who bear with man the terrors of war and the heat of the day. But although these activities will spring like mushrooms to life again, all will be overshadowed by the frenzied efforts of the city dwellers to protect themselves from the new rain from the skies.

There has been a great deal of exaggerated and

## IS IT WAR?

imaginative talk about the nature of aerial warfare. Probably less of London will actually be burned on any one day than was destroyed by the antiquated methods of the seventeenth century in the Great Fire of London. Even if five hundred German bombers succeed in dropping their cargo over the city in a highly successful first raid, they are not likely to kill with high explosive more than ten thousand men, women and children ; and they are hardly likely to be able to do this more than twice a week for three weeks.

We can go farther and say that even if gas is used, as it certainly will be by both sides as a reprisal for its assumed use by the other, it is not likely that the victims will reach the hundred thousands. Of course these estimates may prove altogether too conservative. Thousands may be caught by giant bombs on their way to work, or in the universal trek to the country, and great catastrophes may follow the seepage of mustard gas into the Bakerloo Tube, whither many will have gone as to a secure refuge ; but let us suppose that the soberest of air-warfare specialists is apt to exaggerate the effects of his pet gift of modern science. It is not important that ten thousand or a hundred thousand or more may be killed ; what is important is that millions will be terrified.

How many people are killed by lightning in England in a year ? Yet which of us is there that does not wonder vaguely if the next flash might not possibly hit the house ? Those who remember London in the last war will remember the effect of the mere infant prattlings of the monster which has now grown to be a giant. I came out of the underground at Marlborough Road in North London at a moment when the daylight raiders were overhead. The first thing

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

I noticed was a dog howling and a man being sick. I thought an accident had taken place just outside the station and I walked out into pandemonium. Men were white as a sheet ; soldiers on leave were swearing and putting up their coat collars as if to ward off rain. Yet no one was hurt for miles around and the worst damage was done to some telephone wires.

There were weeks during the Great War when people in the poorer parts of London huddled together every night in whatever shelter they could find and children began to suffer from " nerves " and to grow sickly with twitching faces. And yet what puny harmless affairs those air raids were ; to human life an infinitely smaller risk than crossing a motor road in a built-up area.

It is a very different story in 1936. First of all there is the certainty of gas. So certain is this that the government has issued a series of pamphlets telling us what we are to do. Let us read a few paragraphs from those official guides to the progress of science.

The *Air Raid Precautions Handbook*, No. 2, issued by the Home Office Air Raid Precautions Department in 1935, begins with a general preface which says that

the use of poison gas in war is forbidden by the Geneva Gas Protocol of 1925 . . . and the Government would use every endeavour on the outbreak of war to secure an undertaking from the enemy not to use poison gas. Nevertheless the risk of the enemy using poison gas remains a possibility and cannot be disregarded. The handbooks are designed to describe a scheme of precautions which it is hoped would prove effective in preventing avoidable injury and loss of life, or widespread dislocation of national activities.

## IS IT WAR?

The handbook explains the nature of gas in warfare, describing "Persistent gases" as

usually liquids which evaporate slowly. The vapour so formed mixes with the air, and the effects of the gas will continue to be noticed in the vicinity of the liquid until the latter has all evaporated, or until steps have been taken to render it ineffective.

If persistent gases are contained in shells or bombs the liquid will be widely scattered on the ground and surrounding objects when the explosion occurs, and injurious vapours will continue to be given off for days, or even weeks, unless neutralizing measures are adopted. In the case of mustard gas contact with the contaminated ground or objects will give rise to skin burns until decontamination has been effected. Even walking over contaminated ground is dangerous and must be avoided.

What is the effect of mustard gas?

No immediate pain is felt on contact with the solid, liquid or vapour, but the effects become apparent a few hours later.

Mustard gas also attacks the eyes and lungs, but in these cases also there is considerable delay before the symptoms are noticed, and it is this absence of immediate effect which constitutes one of the greatest dangers when dealing with the gas. The need for protection is not appreciated until too late.

Let us pause and consider what this means. A war has begun; within two hours the enemy bombers are over London. It is true that a number of brave young men have had time to climb in their defensive aircraft to twelve thousand feet to meet them and that they have disabled many planes. One hero dashed to a fiery embrace with his adversary and fell like lightning over Gravesend, carrying with him a cargo of mustard-gas torpedoes some of which sprayed the population he had tried to save. But some bombers



## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

got through. They released their bombs ; did they contain poison gas ?

Ten million Londoners go about sniffing for a smell like geraniums or garlic and a dull yellow stain on the ground ; and you may be sure that whether there is or is not such a smell and such a stain they will be found.

Meanwhile in another part of London somebody screams out that her lungs are beginning to smart ; the waiting crowd huddled into Camden Town tube station panics ; the unseen assassin is stalking among them. Not even those who have the Home Office pamphlets by heart can surely prevent a widespread dislocation of national activities as the panic spreads.

And we may note in passing that quite a large amount of " national activity " involves movement and physical work. It is therefore worth remembering the handbook's statement that " a person working hard is breathing a much greater volume of air than a person sitting still, so that, if both were exposed to the same concentration of gas, the person working hard would suffer the greater injury." There will surely be an almost irresistible impulse on the part of the civilian population under suspicion of having been gassed to sit still and let national activities go hang.

Another incentive to inactivity will be Phosgene, which, as many old soldiers know,

attacks the air cells of the lungs which, in severe cases, gradually become filled with inflammatory fluid resulting in interference with the passage of oxygen to the blood. In this state exertion will cause the patient to collapse from want of oxygen, and death is frequently the result. For this reason phosgene is sometimes described as having a delayed action.

This " delayed " quality is of great importance

## IS IT WAR?

since a civilian population, knowing that the victim knows nothing of his fate until later, will easily convince itself that it has the deadly gas within it, biding its time. There is nothing like fear of having caught the disease for increasing panic. From the point of view of morale you need only sow the fear without the reality.

Then there is ethyl iodoacetate which "evaporates slowly at ordinary temperatures ; when spattered upon the ground the lachrymatory effects of the vapour persist for some hours", while in the case of Bromobenzyl cyanide, "under suitable weather conditions the lachrymatory effect may be noticed several days after contamination". The value of these last two gases will probably be greatest when used in connection with incendiary bombs. There are certain of these like thermite that will melt steel and will not be put out by water. The fire brigades will doubtless be provided with some other liquid with which to fight thermite, but unless they are fully equipped with the right masks they will be weeping so bitterly that they will lose all enthusiasm for their job ; and for a day or two after the fire the neighbouring office buildings will all be tainted with the onions of the god of war.

It is not in the least likely that a bomber will very often hit a particular building. It was only one's aunts who thought that the Hun of 1915 was really aiming at Charing Cross Hospital and the Dome of St. Paul's ; he has for one thing, to release his bomb several miles before he reaches a position vertically above his objective. But a few chance fires with all the neighbours blinded with lachrymatory gases will make it very hard to carry on business as usual.

It is, of course, mustard gas that is the great terror,

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

for this is the gas against which no mask can prevail and which takes possession more secretly than any other. Here are "the principal sources of danger" from mustard gas :

i. When the ground or other objects have been splashed with liquid mustard, vapour is given off which may injure the eyes, the lungs or exposed parts of the body.

ii. The vapour may also be absorbed by clothing and gradually penetrate to the skin, causing burns even after the wearer has moved out of the dangerous area.

iii. If the contaminated ground or splashed objects are touched with the hand or other parts of the body, burns will be caused, unless immediate precautions are taken. Again, if the clothing rubs against anything which is contaminated, the liquid will be soaked up and the clothing may produce blisters. It also has to be remembered that whenever a person has become contaminated he is a source of danger to everyone with whom he comes into contact. If he gets mustard gas on his boots and goes into a room containing a number of other people, they may all be seriously affected by the vapour coming from the boots. Danger arises from the fact that the only means of appreciating the presence of mustard gas is by the sense of smell and that the smell of the gas may easily pass unnoticed or be confused with the smell of other substances.

iv. People may become contaminated by drops of mustard gas which have been released from aircraft in the form of a spray.

The symptoms do not become apparent for from two to eight hours afterwards, by which time it is too late to prevent injury.

These are the terrors that we are virtually promised within a few hours of a war's beginning. They must not be exaggerated, the handbook goes on to say, for the danger may be avoided by going under cover. But if a gas has been used whose presence cannot easily be detected and whose effects will remain for hours, days, even weeks, and if the only way to pro-

## IS IT WAR?

protect oneself is to go under cover, then the dislocation of national activity will become gigantic.

Imagine, for example, the train crews who bring in London's food supply daily from the country. Is it likely that they will relish the task of approaching an affected area, sniffing the while for signs of garlic or geranium? There may be a few people in May-fair whose sole part in the city's life is to beautify it by their presence, but most of London's ten millions are taking a necessary part in keeping London alive day by day. All these will have to be guarded against one sort of gas by masks and be decontaminated from possible mustard gas every time they step outside on the days following an air raid. Even if they do not need to be treated, it will be very difficult to prove it to their satisfaction.

Meanwhile the phrase "keep under cover" turns out to be rather more complicated than it sounds.

### 20

The job of "keeping under cover" in the next war will be complicated, and anyone who thinks of doing it had better begin his preparations to-day. Every family in London must provide itself with one gas-proof room. This may be inconvenient to the rather large number of families who live several people in one room, but they had better resist any tendency to grumble by visualizing now and then the effects of mustard gas.

The first difficulty is that "protection from high-explosive bombs is best obtained below ground level" but "a room on any floor above the ground floor is safer from gas than one on the ground floor" while "the risk from incendiary bombs is greatest on the top floor". Bearing these three things in mind the

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

average worker in the East End is to choose between the spare bedroom, the servants' hall, the library, the solarium, and the wine cellar: the handbook advises him to plump for the wine cellar.

But even the wine cellar is not too good unless the windows are small and unless they face soft ground, rather than a paved or metallised surface, so that "the blast of an exploding bomb may be more smothered".

Having got the right room, the glass must be taken out of the windows and wood or other less fragile covering substituted. (By the way, the room must be on the side of the house away from the prevailing wind.) After sealing up the windows, every other crevice must be sealed and all other doors and windows in the house must be closed before retiring to the gas-protected room. As most raids are likely to come in the night, that means that from the outset of war our children must all sleep in hermetically-sealed nurseries unless we all sleep together in the gas-protected room.

But we have only selected the room so far, now let us prepare it.

If planking is available, it is advisable to board up the windows on the *outside*, as an additional measure for protection of the glass against the effects of high explosive. The inside should be covered with materials such as oil-cloth, linoleum, carpet or blanket. *In cases where illumination is important* (italics ours), translucent materials such as non-inflammable celluloid, or cellophane, may be used.

The fireplace and any other opening through which air can enter will require closing up by wood, cardboard or similar material. Even the keyhole should be stopped up.

Having planned our homes in this fashion we are recommended to stock the room with the goods likely

## IS IT WAR?

to be needed for a twelve-hour siege. Here is the list ; it is worth quoting for the picture of life it affords :

1. Candles and matches or electric torches. (Since naturally all public lighting supplies will be cut off directly a raid begins ; it is hard indeed to see how they are ever going to be put on again until the war is over.)
  2. Essential furniture, especially seats.
  3. Blankets for warmth.
  4. Sanitary utensils.
  5. Disinfectant.
  6. Water for drinking and washing.
  7. Cold provisions. (Delivered no doubt by the grocer's boy in gas mask and on his way to be decontaminated.)
  8. Plates, knives, forks, etc.
  9. Books and other means of keeping the occupants engaged in a sedentary manner.
- Note that smoking cannot be allowed.

Now exactly how long will the majority of people be willing to read books and play halma to keep up their morale in the cause of a government which for all its sanity and good intentions was not able to prevent this sort of thing happening ?

But while we sit in our anti-lethal chambers among the sanitary utensils and the books, what will be happening in the great world outside ? An interesting notion can be gleaned from another *Air Raid Precaution Handbook*, No. 7, which deals with the problems likely to face our merchant sea captains.

Nobody seems to know whether aerial bombardment will destroy our expensive warships or not. If there is a safe hiding-place for them camouflaged up the Congo or elsewhere, the answer is probably that the battleships will not be scratched. But there can be little doubt that our merchant ships may expect a very poor time of it.

We are all proud, for some reason, of the fact that

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

England is an island. Because it is a right little tight little island in peace-time and war-time, it has to be fed constantly by thousands of little ships from abroad. In the next war the enemy will make a persistent attempt, if not to sink them, at least to contaminate their cargoes and make them unfit for human consumption. Nor will it be very hard for him to succeed. Germany did very well with the U-boat blockade, but there are many more aeroplanes than submarines and they are vastly more mobile. While we are sitting in our rooms, reading Dickens but not smoking, a spray of mustard gas is expected to be directed at our incoming food carriers. Here is the handbook's picture :

A ship can be attacked by an aircraft with mustard-gas spray and the liquid may, or more probably may not, be observed falling.

When the liquid arrives it is seen in the form of brown drops on the decks and paintwork, and a smell of mustard or garlic is noticed.

Every drop of the liquid that has fallen on board is dangerous.

Any man who touches any contaminated bulkhead, rail, deck, screen, rope, navigational instruments, such as engine-room telegraphs, or anything else, with his bare hands, will be a casualty . . .

If he walks across a freshly contaminated deck he will pick up the mustard gas on his boots, and may carry it elsewhere and contaminate other portions of the deck.

If he is wearing protective clothing which is contaminated, attempts to undress himself will probably result in his becoming a casualty.

Paintwork is penetrated easily by mustard gas . . . it will still be dangerous for at least a week.

The decks will remain dangerous for lying on for several weeks unless decontaminated.

If ventilating fans are started up and air drawn down below from contaminated decks, eye casualties may result.

## IS IT WAR?

In these circumstances it is surely very unlikely that any neutral shipping will care to endanger itself by trading with England, and since in war-time, when our own shipping is busy with war material, we rely on neutral shipping for most of our food, that will be a serious loss.

What will happen to the cargo? Appendix 4 tells us. Timber must be burned; wood pulp if only slightly contaminated can be used for paper-making, but the rest must be burned; coal and coke, fortunately, must also be burned, but only with the greatest caution in furnaces; locomotives and large machinery need not be burned, they must be set aside until they can be swabbed with paraffin. Steel plate and girders need one month's weathering; meat and fruit must be destroyed; so too must all grain, salt and nitrates, but stone needs no treatment! Canvas can be boiled for half an hour, but cork must be destroyed; as also beer and wine, tea and tobacco.

In short, after the war had proceeded for a couple of weeks the grocer's boy, mask or no mask, would cease to call.

But by the fourth day at latest Londoners will probably have decided upon making a dash for the open country. We shall have some idea of the problems involved in this perfectly reasonable desire if we look up *Air Raid Precautions Memorandum*, No. 2, on "Rescue Parties and Clearance of Debris".

There are surprisingly few ways out of London. Almost everyone will want to make for the North or the West. They do this nearly every normal Saturday afternoon in summer and we know the result. Consider how much more deplorable the state of the roads would be after even a mildly successful air raid. It is absurd to imagine the Germans blowing up huge



## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

tracts of London, but it is just as absurd to assume that all their bombs will fall into the Thames or into such nationally unimportant spots as the British Museum. Suppose a couple of bombs did great damage at Clapham Junction, another made a crater at Hammersmith Broadway, another at the Elephant and another on the Great North Road: how much of the remaining thoroughfares could be used for civilians hurrying to possible safety?

It would be of vital importance [says the pamphlet] for the movement of air raid precaution services (fire-engines, ambulances, etc.) as well as in the general public interest, that roads should be kept open to traffic and that, if many roads were damaged, those which were of greater traffic value should be first repaired.

This, like so many pious sentiments, makes unimpeachable good sense; but we may as well try to imagine how it could be done. By the time this war could break out (in a later prophecy I shall consider the earliest possible date), Germany ought to have some five thousand first-line bombers and France and ourselves the same number. It is true that these bombers will not attack with impunity; like many insects they will only sting in their death agony; but each side will be faced with the need of winning the war within perhaps a few hours. Probably the British government will carry out its duty to humanity and telephone to Berlin suggesting that the war should be fought with kid gloves—which in this case will mean without mustard gas; but having done this it will also carry out its duty to its own people and load up with every conceivable form of death.

It will know that one thing has not changed since 1914 and that is the necessity from Germany's point of view of a rapid victory. This means the bombing

## IS IT WAR?

of London before British aeroplanes have had time to dislocate the industrial centres of Germany. If Germany were willing to limit air warfare she might as well not fight at all, since she must win in the air or be starved out.

The smallest number of bombers likely to appear over London on the first day is five hundred. Let us suppose that even half of these fail to get back and that the losses everywhere are so great that only a hundred bombers can be sent thenceforward on the rest of the days of the next three weeks.

There are ten million people in the London area ; it is not likely that more than one in a hundred will have a bomb fall near him on any one raid. But which one will that be ? Will not the other ninety-nine be sure that it will be each one of them ? To prevent panic therefore we need ten million gas masks and ten million people instructed in putting them on.

Next, we have to remember that no gas mask and no clothes will withstand mustard gas. The handbook offers us as our best protection the following :

Whenever it is necessary for particular individuals to carry out essential work in places where they are likely to be exposed to either liquid mustard gas or high concentrations of the vapour, they must be protected by some form of clothing which the gas cannot penetrate. The best material . . . is oilskin of the type used in the Navy. . . . It should be noted that the time taken by liquid mustard gas to get through this oilskin material in hot weather is about half the time taken in cold weather. . . . The strong oiled wigan of which protective gloves are made will, when new, keep out the liquid gas for at least four hours even in hot weather. Garments of this material are decontaminated by boiling, which treatment reduces the penetration time. After such treatment clothing should not be worn for more than three hours.

The non-porous nature of this oilskin material causes

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

the heat and perspiration from the body to be retained inside the clothing. In hot weather the amount of manual work that a person wearing oilskins can accomplish is consequently limited, owing to fatigue and exhaustion. . . . In temperate climates a fit man so equipped can do two spells of hard work of two hours each during the day, if an interval of four hours' rest is allowed between the spells of work.

Now let us imagine the state of the roads in war-time London. Five hundred bombers have appeared and disappeared in fifteen minutes. Each one had to come within range of anti-aircraft guns for a few seconds at several points and so a few have been hit. Bomber destroyers of a new pattern were able to rise from the ground in time to intercept a few more and to give chase to the rest after they had unloaded their bombs.

The result of this fifteen minutes is a hundred fires started by thermite, five hundred craters, of which twenty-five are on main thoroughfares and involve the destruction of electric cables, gas and water mains and public sewers. Far more important than these, there has been left behind an assumption that mustard gas is falling in fine rain and lying in splashes upon the ground. The average Londoner decides that it is time to leave for the country. Half the railways are blocked and in the roads are men dressed in a sort of diver's uniform struggling to do two hours' work before having to take a four-hours' rest. When they come to boil their suits there is no hot water since the gas and electricity have had to be turned off. The handbook advises that if the road is vital for traffic, it be repaired by filling up the craters with debris from fallen houses without waiting to repair cables ; but surely the chances of getting the place shipshape before the return of the bombers is very small. It is hardly to

## IS IT WAR?

be supposed that the Germans will keep off long enough to get suits boiled, craters filled up, and fires put out.

Meanwhile every Londoner who sees a man in oilskins while he himself is unprotected will be certain that the hidden gas has already settled on his tender skin. What is he to do? He may try to join the struggling crowd on the Barnet by-pass and he may have got a few miles out when the roar of engines penetrates the clouds for a second time. Or he may retire to the gas-proof room and read books.

Of course, the average man may never breathe in one breath of mustard or come within a mile of an incendiary bomb, but will he believe this? Will he keep calm? Will he continue to deliver the milk and the morning paper? Will the unemployed man and the starving woman look contentedly at the few shops still full of food when the ships cease to bring in food on London River and the junctions become hopelessly jammed? Consider the number of men needed to get London through its normal day and night in the open air: railwaymen, busmen, tram-men, police, scavengers, postmen, lorry-drivers, dockers, permanent-way men, firemen, market-men, parcels and goods delivery men, taxi-men, repairers of roads, lights, telephones, butcher boys, messenger boys, cleaners and so on and so on. Every one of these must be prepared to give up his essential work or put on a wearisome garment in which he can only work for two hours. Can it be done?

And as we sit in our hermetically sealed rooms dead to the daylight, our sole compensation will be that in Berlin and Hamburg, in Munich and Cologne, in the Rhineland and Prussia, the same horrors are being enacted by our brave boys. That is the next war as it is visualized by our present sane well-meaning government. That is war as it is expected by the Hitlers of

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

this world also. It is the inevitable effect of taking up military weapons instead of being content with economic ones.

In brief, the evolution of the tools of war has reached a stage when it is no longer possible for any governmental action to protect its civilian population. And in the face of this we can with reasonable safety proceed to make prophecy No. II :

THERE WILL BE NO WAR IN WESTERN EUROPE  
FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS.

### 21

There will be no war in Europe for the next five years, because the evolution of the tools of war has made it impossible to protect civilian populations from destruction.

Because people do not realize clearly enough how subservient man is to his tools, they permit themselves a succession of fantastic scares. In the few months that this book has taken to write there have been a dozen full-blown war scares. An enterprising journalist wrote a book to prove that war must break out in June, 1935 ; left-wing papers and orators insist that a conspiracy of armament-makers and capitalists generally is hurrying us into hostilities as fast as it can. Now it may be perfectly true that the cause of war is capitalism and that its cure is the destruction of capitalism ; but that does not alter the fact that all the efforts of every intelligent capitalist government to-day are concentrated upon preventing war, since war would be the suicide of capitalism.

The evolution of the tools of war has forced every supporter of capitalism who is not a madman to enlist on the side of peace, and the only possible advocate of

## IS IT WAR?

war to-day would be a ruthlessly doctrinaire communist who saw in war the quickest path to world-wide communism. There has probably never been a time in the world's history when there have been so many exasperated men and women alive, or so many unsatisfactory communities of human beings ; there are both emotional and rational grounds for men of one nation to hate the men of other nations ; there are economic needs everywhere which cannot be satisfied under the *status quo* ; there are political, religious, racial wrongs in plenty—all the things that have bred war throughout human history ; but, because man must subject his actions to the reality created by his tools, war cannot be.

Since this prophecy goes against the common opinion of the day, we may spend a little time in justifying it.

In the first place, the reader must not think we are assuming that the governments of the world are suddenly become reasonable, or that intelligence has for the first time taken command of human destiny. Far from it ; fear and stupidity are in their usual place amid the seats of the mighty. It is not because Sir Norman Angell or anyone else has *proved* that war is bad policy economically that the armaments will rust at least a little longer. At this moment Mussolini is finishing a minor war for precisely the economic objectives that war can most certainly not achieve.

The first reason why war cannot be at present has been stated above : the tools of war have reached a stage of evolution at which it becomes impossible to use them without bringing about the destruction of the governments which control them. No government will risk so great a danger until it finds itself faced with another and greater danger. There is such a danger looming on the horizon : a danger to established

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

governments which is at once the reason why there will be no war yet, and the reason why there must eventually be a war. We may describe this danger as follows :

Human evolution has reached a stage when the way in which one man must unite with other men to get what he wants out of life has changed.

Hitherto climate, geography and past history have made of a man first of all a Frenchman or a German, let us say. Other material forces, of the sort we call "economic" in a restricted sense, have subdivided the French, or the Germans, into several economic classes. Of these two divisions, that which makes one man a Frenchman and the other a German has hitherto had a stronger hold on human loyalties than the fact that some individuals in the other nations belong to the same economic class as oneself.

The motherland, the mother tongue, the real or imagined ties of blood—these have held men together closest. Trade unionists may have voted for years to stop war between brothers across national frontiers, but at the first bugle-call they have forgotten brotherhood and become the sons of France, or Germany or Britain again. Capitalists may have protected their own interests by bargains such as that during the last war between French and German mine-owners who *arranged* that the property of neither should be bombed by the other's armies ; but on the whole capitalists have been loyal to their countries. Now, however, the evolution of human tools has altered that. The natural loyalties of the individual are not what they were. And it is this that explains and dominates the present European situation. Why was it that the French government did not step in and stop Germany re-arming ? There have been innumerable occasions

## IS IT WAR?

during the last ten years when France could have invaded Germany with every legal right and no danger to herself. Why did not France grasp the nettle even before it had developed its stings? There was a time when Germany was defenceless and yet clearly beginning to defend herself; France never moved a finger. Why?

It was because the German government, defeated in war, would have been destroyed, and Germany would have become a Communist country; and so the only result of France opposing her historic rival, when that rival was still at her mercy, would have been to make the Rhine the frontier of a system of government that was even more repulsive to the French capitalist than Hitler himself.

Thus the time when French policy was determined by the fact that a Frenchman was French first and a capitalist afterwards is over, and now French policy will be determined henceforth by the fact that a French capitalist is a capitalist first and a Frenchman afterwards.<sup>1</sup>

This change means that *every war between nations to-day is a civil war within the international unit of capitalism.*

Gone is the day when every Frenchman could look across the Rhine at the common enemy; gone is the day when rival capitalist groups could exploit nationalism to achieve a wider empire of profits and trade; for while the trade unionists have confined their energies chiefly to talking about it, capitalism has actually set up its International. Or rather, the inevitable evolution of human tools and of the economic organization which is dependent on them has forced an International on the capitalist; has brought it about

<sup>1</sup> This was written before the coming of the Popular Front, of which more will be written later.



## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

that instead of looking to war as a means of promoting national trade domination, capitalists must combine across national frontiers in a desperate effort to keep themselves from the mutual suicide pact of war. Or look at it from the point of view of Hitler himself. Does Hitler want war? Perhaps there is no one in Europe who wants peace more. So much does Hitler want peace, that if only he were also prepared to give up the things that lead inevitably to war he would be the main bulwark of peace in our stormy world.

Consider the internal situation of Germany. No country requires the trade of the rest of the world more; foreign capital alone has kept Germany going since the World War, and now that the Nazi policy has made enemies in all directions foreign capital is not forthcoming, and Germany languishes. There are bread lines in German cities; people go short of butter and meat; a policy of personal hate and prejudice has bred loathing between neighbours; the standard of living has gone down and down in spite of the stimulating of industry with the drug of armament building. Behind the flags and the bunting, the cheering and the marching, is a rising tide of anger, the more dangerous for being hidden. Imagine such a population subjected to the sort of war we have outlined in previous sections. How long would it be content to rejoice that it had a Leader, when British and French bombers rent the skies above?

On the eve of Hitler's accession to power one in four of all Germans voted communist. Where are those five million communists to-day? Not all in concentration camps, or exiled to New York or Jerusalem. Many a brown shirt has a red lining. Indeed, in spite of all the horrors of unrestricted terrorism, there are eighty-six communist papers duplicated in cellars and

## IS IT WAR?

distributed by the underground organizations in Hitler's Germany to-day.

A mild little German exile told me that when the day of reckoning came, provided the moderate elements in the Communist movement could get control rapidly, the number of deaths might be limited to a million and a half, but if the extremists seized control there would be five million.

"You see," he said, apologetically, "so many ordinary men and women have been so horribly treated that they say to themselves, 'Well, when the time comes I am going to get so and so.'"

Is it likely that Hitler would willingly consign his power and his life to the loyalty of the millions of insulted and injured, however much they can be persuaded as yet to take part in mass meetings? You can teach a man to drill and to shoot, but when hunger gives the commands he is apt to march and to shoot in unexpected directions. Hitler must avoid war at every cost; even though in the end he may be doomed to go down fighting. In short, there are no two nations in the world to-day so desperately intent on peace as France and Germany, for they are both controlled by governments which occupy key positions in the capitalist International. War between them must mean the destruction of capitalism.

It is no argument against this that in 1914 war meant no good to victor any more than to vanquished, and yet war came. Two things have utterly altered the situation as between 1936 and 1914. The first is the evolution of human tools, including the tools of war; the other is associated with it. Men's loyalties are conditioned by the way in which they work and the comradeship their work produces; just as French and German capitalists have been forced by the logic

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

of events to become capitalists first and nationals second. So the workers of all countries have felt the barriers between them disappearing.

When in the years before 1914 a world war was brewing, governments had to measure their strength only against that of their rivals ; they could count on the morale of a solid nation. It might need the gentle arts of propaganda to keep the civilian population at the right temperature of patriotic hate, and there might be a few Quakers, Tolstoyans, William Morris socialists who for individual emotional reasons might cause trouble, but a nation at war was a unit to be relied on.

There were, it is true, scattered here and there, a few theorists, professional minority mongers, unpatriotic agitators, trouble makers, who maintained the remarkably simple theory that no worker ever gained anything from war and that therefore every sane worker had the right to demand of his government, as the first duty of governments, to keep him out of war ; and that if any government failed in this duty it had *ipso facto* ceased to be a government at all.

These groups believed, further, that wars would continue so long as the profit-making company called a man's country continued to be organized as at present, and that the company would finally be overthrown by those whose shoes pinched first, who would be the working classes. So they preached a class war as the only way out of recurring wars between nations, and they opposed all national wars whatsoever, and in especial the war to make the world safe for democracy that we began in 1914. Their theories were derived from the writings of Karl Marx, although few of them had read anything by him except a pamphlet called "The Communist Manifesto", which had taken the same place in their minds as did the Athanasian Creed in the

## IS IT WAR?

minds of early Catholics. And since it was possible for the orthodox economists at orthodox places of learning to pick holes in Marx's economic writings, these pedants said that the whole business of Marxism was unimportant. So when the Marxians objected to the war, their governments shut them up in much the same spirit as they would have shut up followers of Mary Baker Eddy or Pastor Russell, if they became public nuisances by obeying their creeds out of season as well as in season. There was nothing much to fear from them really, men argued, but on the other hand it was as well to be careful in war-time.

In 1914 there was probably no one in the world who thought that in 1936 a nation with one-sixth of the habitable globe under its control would be devoted to these principles, nor that in every other important country a powerful minority of organized citizens would hold the same theories.

If the political structure of Germany, France, Japan, Poland, Hungary, Roumania—to mention a few of the most involved of present-day nations—were to be subjected to stress of war, a successful Communist revolution would be almost certain. And so the capitalist, be he German, French, Japanese, Polish, Hungarian, Roumanian, must do all that he can to prevent war as the first law of his own self-preservation.

How important it is for the capitalist to avoid war was illustrated by the extraordinary events in Japan during 1936. The assassinations were apparently a protest against the way in which capitalist influences were intent upon keeping Japanese policy from leading to war. The fanatical patriots regarded this determination of capitalist elements to avoid suicide by law as a degenerate "westernism" holding up the manifest destiny of the country.

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

Nothing could be more significant ; the evolution of tools in Japan has brought western capitalism to Japan, and this capitalism would be destroyed by even a successful war. The orientally religious elements, the feudal conservatives of the land, would like to use the destructive tools of the west, "honourable machine gun" and "honourable air bomber", for the purposes of war thought of in feudal ideals. They do not see that Roncesvalles could not be fought with high explosives and that the nature of modern war tools would destroy the economic system which creates them and which they create.

And so we justify our prophecy that there will be no war for five years in spite of those who counter with "What about 1914?" thus :

I. A new stage of the evolution of human tools has been reached in which it is impossible for governments to protect their civil populations in war-time from wholesale destruction.

II. In this new stage there is communism organized in every country in opposition to capitalist government and ready to take advantage of the decay of capitalism that war would inevitably accelerate. Thus capitalism will keep the peace as long as it can.

### 22

We have suggested reasons why we may hope for a few years' breathing space without war ; but we have suggested that this will be but a temporary respite ; and so we proceed to our third prophecy :

### EVENTUALLY WAR IS INEVITABLE.

Once more let us think of man and his tools. He makes them, it is true, but only in the same sense as

## IS IT WAR?

a penguin makes paddles out of wings. He is the creator and therefore the master of his tools; but he is also their slave, for he cannot stop making them. It is all very well to protest against the machine age, to wear pseudo-peasant homespun through which the wind whistles to your inmost recesses, to talk of a ten-years' truce from scientific invention—all these are gestures of the unreconciled individualist, but they lead nowhere. Tools will continue to evolve into more powerful tools, altering man's relationship to his fellow-man in the process. And the present stage of that evolution is one that makes war impossible. The next stage will make war inevitable.

We must think of man's tools as so many well-adapted limbs. Further, we must remember that an adapted limb, the penguin's wing, for example, not only improves the penguin's chances of survival; it also limits the penguin to certain restricted ways of living. Outside the land of ice and snow the penguin is doomed.

Exactly the same is true of man and his tools. Take, for example, the use of electricity. Man is able to use electricity to do all sorts of things that he could not do before; but the very existence of electricity as a source of usable power prevents man from ever doing again countless things that he could do before the age of electric power began.

His associations with his fellows must be different; his thoughts, his ideals, his morals, all are changed for ever; new possibilities arise, but many of the old ones have gone. It is no mere matter of travelling by automobile instead of by horse and buggy, this constant changing of human nature in response to his changing tools. We can see this by a very clear example in the past. For centuries men used spinning-wheels and simple handlooms, and so long as they did this the one

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

overshadowing unit was the family unit, which was not only an emotional and a biological unit, but a practical economic unit. Families worked together at home. Then came the invention of machinery for spinning and weaving. It was not merely another and more efficient way of making clothes, this evolution from one kind of tool to another: it was the upsetter of family life, indeed the virtual destruction of the family as the overshadowing unit. Men and women no longer saw most of their own relatives; they stood in long factory lines with strangers. Girls who had worked under the eye of their mothers, now worked night and day with men they would never have been allowed to see. It was not merely the method of making clothes that changed; it was the way of looking at things, the horizon of experience. After the industrial revolution the family could never be the same as it was in peasant patriarchal days. And although ethics and religion and spiritual values are more important than tools and industry, nobody was able to stop the evolution of tools so as to protect the old ethics and religion and spiritual values from decay. The evolution of tools pays the piper and therefore calls the spiritual tune.

We must also remember that by "tools" we do not simply mean bits of mechanical ingenuity. The monetary system of a community is a tool; so are the countless ways in which man organizes the business of daily living. We talk of the machinery of banking, and indeed banking is one of the most important tools invented by man.

Now the reason why there will be no war at present is not only that tools like poison gas and the aeroplane make war impossible, but also because the other kinds of tool which make up the economic structure of our communities also make war impossible. And the

## IS IT WAR?

reason why war is in the end unavoidable is that these last tools will evolve in such a way as to make it so.

The evolution of tools has brought about a condition in which no nation can hope any longer to gain anything tangible even by winning a war. Those who worry about the morality of war should begin their practical arguments from this point. It may be true, indeed it is demonstrably so, that at certain periods of human history war was a useful process, but now it is useless. Since utility is the measure of morality in the long run, that is an important consideration. The American who regards Washington as a hero may nevertheless have qualms about supporting war now that war is demonstrably futile.

Now if that was all that we had to say as to the influence of the evolution of tools on war, we might have left out the qualifying words "for five years" from our second prophecy; but unfortunately there is another thing that that evolution is doing, and in it lies the sole cause of war to-day. No government will deliberately commit suicide by going to war if it has a good chance of maintaining itself in peace; but if the economic tools used by a government in its organizing of its community are such that in the end the government will be destroyed by its starving and disgruntled subjects, then it is likely to try the gambler's last throw and go down fighting foreigners rather than be caught in an internal financial crisis.

To put it a little more bluntly, there are three governments to-day, which thanks to a combination of adverse material conditions (lack of raw materials for necessities of life, etc.) and the use of obsolete economic tools, are on the verge of bankruptcy; they are Italy, Germany and Japan. In each of these countries stress of circumstance has created a dictator-



ship dependent in the long run upon delivering the goods to the dictated, upon providing that minimum of comfort without which even Germans will not continue to march in step and wave flags on days of national rejoicing. In each of these countries it is demonstrable that the tools of capitalist economics cannot for much longer achieve the minimum results.

Given the present economic organization of international trade, and the present forms of production and distribution, these three countries cannot survive, and so the time must come when their dictatorships will have to face the wrath of the people. By active propaganda, that is education of the right sort, wrath can for a time be turned outwards to foreigners, and that is the sole hope for Mussolini, Hitler and the Japanese imperialists. In the end they must choose between certain elimination at the hands of their people, or the uncertainties of a world set in flames. The temperament of the megalomaniacs whom modern man chooses for rulers is all in favour of the latter choice.

We see, then, that although all capitalist governments must regard war as suicide, nevertheless they must all prepare for an inevitable conflict in the long run. This explains why two incompatible policies are being elaborated at the same time by countries like Britain and France, with which the main burden of keeping the peace must rest. On the one hand there is the League of Nations, which is capitalism organized in the field of international affairs to avoid if possible the catastrophe that would destroy capitalism altogether. On the other hand there is the complicated system of alliances and agreements aimed at canalizing the inevitable conflict into certain directions. As time goes on these alliances and alignments are taking more

## IS IT WAR?

and more clearly the form of a war between the dictatorships of the right and the dictatorship of the left, with the governments of every "democratic" country divided as to which side should be supported.

Most people imagine the next war in terms of the last and look for a war to break out between Germany and the allies of 1914. It is therefore necessary now to consider where this war, which we have seen to be inevitable, is most likely to break out.

To begin with, it will not be one more of the traditional Rhineland quarrels. The allies and the fabricators of the next war will be Germany and Japan and their primary object will be the destruction of Russia.

Neither of these countries will break the peace so long as they can possibly avoid it, because anything but an impossible lightning victory must involve their political and economic systems in destruction; but in the long run circumstances will make them into gamblers together. And so our fourth prophecy is:

THE NEXT WAR WILL BEGIN AS A HOLY WAR  
BETWEEN GERMANY AND JAPAN ON THE ONE  
SIDE AND RUSSIA ON THE OTHER.

Let us rapidly justify this prophecy.

First, no capitalist government will go to war unless there is no alternative but internal bankruptcy and revolution.

Second, Italy, Germany and Japan are the three countries inevitably faced with eventual bankruptcy.

Third, Japan must come into conflict with Russia sooner or later or abandon her expansionist policy on the continent of Asia. But it is impossible to defeat Russia owing to geographical factors. Japan is an island with a concentrated industrial population at the mercy of aircraft; Russia is a sprawling continent.

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

Japan's capital is within striking distance of Vladivostok ; Russia's vital spots can never be struck at from the East.

Fourth, Germany cannot hope to detach the powers of western Europe from their mutual alliances in the event of a direct attack to the west. Whatever else is uncertain, it is at least certain that a repetition of 1914 would produce virtually the same alignment against her. But if she can preach a holy war against communism and buy off certain countries with guarantees of their own interests, it is possible that Germany might get a free hand from England and France to do whatever she pleases with Russia.

Fifth, only by an attack from east and west at once could Russia possibly be defeated with the modern tools of war.

Sixth, there is nothing for Germany to gain by attempted expansion to the west ; but by opening a door to the east the vast potential market of Asia becomes the private property of Japan and Germany to divide between them for their mutual benefit.

We see, then, that for the next few years the democracies of Europe will be choosing between traditional and outworn policies based upon the ancient grievances along the Rhine, and a clear-cut issue as to whether they will support a dictatorship of the left or the dictatorships of the right. The issue will be settled by the public opinion of England and France.

It is most important for us to see how this new situation has been brought about as a consequence of the evolution of human tools and especially the tools of war. These last force upon Japan an alliance with Germany, for without such an alliance Japan, as we have said, cannot defeat Russia, since a closely populated island is far more vulnerable to air attack than a

## IS IT WAR?

sparsely populated continent like the U.S.S.R. Moreover, the economic tools used by Japan involve the existence of great hardship and discontent, and no such population can be trusted to maintain its morale under a rain of mustard gas, thermite and high explosives such as would descend from the neighbourhood of Vladivostock.

Inevitably the day will come when one of two things happens ; either the militarist patriots, who lately astonished the world with an exhibition of advanced political assassination, will overcome the wiser capitalists and force Russia into a war, or the capitalists, faced with revolution at home, will take the initiative themselves. When that happens Germany will march eastwards. Such a state of affairs will please a certain group of people in all countries, who will find that Hitler is really a Christian crusader after all. We can already hear them raising their voice in our midst. Here is a quotation from a leader in the *Daily Mail* :

“What should the British attitude be ? This can best be decided by noting what the Soviet would have this country do and taking the opposite course.”

Is it surprising, such being the editorial view, that this paper offers a reward for the encouragement of recruiting and prints letters from readers that seem particularly helpful ? Here are two of these :

“Give the parents of every boy who enlists a policy of insurance of 500 pounds (or any amount sufficient to induce parents to part more readily with their sons) in case of war or death through disease in war-time.”

And—

“Abolish from the streets the great numbers of begging ex-Service men, wearing medals and giving, by their appearance, psychologically the worst impressions

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

of the results of an army career to the young would-be recruits."

To which we may add a headline from the same paper :

"SPIRIT VOICE " SAYS "RE-ARM", CLAIM AT SÉANCE.

The people who feel like this exist in all countries and upon their support Germany must count, if the plans are to go ahead, for without the benevolent neutrality of Britain, France and America the crusade will hardly be worth while.

But against the German chances of success there are two powerful factors. First, it will be most unpleasant for the U.S.A. to see Japan dominate the Pacific, as might happen if Germany and Japan between them temporarily crushed Russia and bullied China into being an exploited area for their benefit. Second, and even more important, Hitler has alienated two very influential forces—organized labour in all democratic countries and Jewish capitalism ; in consequence France has taken the momentous step of checkmating the whole Nazi *weltpolitik* with the Franco-Soviet pact.

The ratification by France in 1936 of a pact with Soviet Russia is the most important single event since the war, since it is the first act in a new period, the last period, of this Epoch of Stupidity in which we live. It is the first indication of the alignment of nations when the inevitable conflict comes. That conflict will be fundamentally a death struggle between the Dictatorships of the Right and Communism. It is of tremendous interest to see which way the democracies are going to jump. The pact indicates a united front between capitalist democracies and their late worst enemy.

Of course, the framers of the pact on the French side did not consider it from this point of view. They did

## IS IT WAR?

not see that it was a vital step in the ultimate war between Fascism and Communism. They were far more concerned in playing the old game of check-mating Germany in the interests of France, a game which has been played for a thousand years. But political history has always been like that : you play politics in the good old way and economic evolution uses your game as a step to a new future, of which you are not aware.

The Franco-Soviet pact is only a first step and it may very well be undone. However, to understand its importance we must consider our problem from another angle. We have seen the reasons for doubting the imminence of war and for expecting an ultimate catastrophe, and we have outlined the grounds for expecting the field of war to be in the East. But we must leave the further discussion of international affairs until we have seen how certain nations are likely to evolve within their own boundaries. For it is here that we shall find the full justification of our last prophecy.

## CHAPTER V

### LEFT OR RIGHT ?

23

WE have seen that when finally war comes, it will be a war planned by the dictatorships of the right as a last desperate effort to save themselves against the dictatorships of the left ; and that the war-makers, Germany in particular, are already seeking for the support of the democracies against the common enemy.

This war is not likely to break out before 1940 at earliest ; and it will depend largely upon the evolution of democracy in France, England, the U.S.A. and in some of the smaller countries in the meanwhile, whether it is to be postponed for some years more.

What is going to happen to democracy in its few remaining strongholds ? Can the democratic form of government persist in a world where its rivals the dictatorships have taken firm hold ? The question is not whether you and I prefer to live in a democratic country ; it is whether such a country can survive in a struggle for existence with countries otherwise organized.

We live in a world of nations at war, using economic weapons and preparing other types of weapons over against the day when they cannot get what they want by economic means. In such a world it is not the nation with the finest philosophers, the greatest

## LEFT OR RIGHT ?

artists, the most free citizens that survives ; it is the country best organized for survival, a brutal matter.

Is a democracy well organized for mere survival ? What is democracy ? It is the theory that a man should be encouraged to be a " political being ", to think about political problems freely and without humility. He must not say, " I do not understand anything about the gold standard and so, that being the chief political issue at this time, I shall not vote in the coming election ". That would be avoiding his responsibilities ; he must vote whether he understands the issue or not ; and he must be encouraged to think that he does understand by all the wiles of party political propaganda. Then the majority of such ignorant, or deceived, voters is bound to be right and the policy they dictate will be the best. It is astonishing that human societies have succeeded in surviving so long on such a theory.

Put in another way, democracy is the theory that the free use of reason and the social habit are tools that can be used at the same time and not get in each other's way. It is also an attempt to safeguard the dignity of the individual soul against the claims of society. Society, says the democrat, what is it ? Who has ever seen it ? It is a mythical being to whom private and personal happiness is invariably sacrificed. Away with metaphysical units, let us get back to the real unit which is the human individual. Have our ancestors fought privilege in high places—feudal lords, absolute monarchs, money barons—to sell the fort to the most cruel despot of all, the bloodless, heartless state ?

It sounds very well, this championing of your individuality and mine ; but when we get down to brass tacks we find it safest to put the problem in a different



form. Individuals like ourselves all the world over have united themselves, willingly or unwillingly, into communities bent on destroying one another ; two such communities, Germany and Italy, make no bones about regarding destruction as a major virtue. Some of these communities have been organized on the assumption that the plain man cannot think about the technical details of politics and economics, cannot in fact be trusted to be a " political being " and take part in the government of himself ; other communities have organized on the opposite assumption that he can, or at least that he can be taught to do so. When it comes to a struggle for existence between these two communities, which will prove the fitter to survive, the democracy or the dictatorship ? We give the answer to this question bluntly in the form of our fifth prophecy :

DEMOCRACY WILL BE DEAD BY 1950.

That is to say, the theory of political individualism leading through education to Utopia will have nothing but a certain amount of lip-service paid to it. Freedom of thought, the rights of minorities, party government with official oppositions, free elections, majority decisions on important questions of policy, all these will be gone. One by one the great democracies will vote away their own right to behave like a democracy, and those who refuse to vote so will be persuaded by force.

It will not happen in every country as it has happened in Germany or Russia. Every country, for example, will exalt its national vice into a national virtue and surrender its democratic constitution in its name. Just as the over-disciplined Germans crushed freedom in the name of discipline, so the under-

## LEFT OR RIGHT?

disciplined Americans will crush freedom in the name of liberty.

Now if our prophecy seems too sweeping, let us consider why Democracy came into the world and then perhaps we shall see more clearly why it is doomed. The answer once more is to be found in the inexorable demands of man's evolving tools.

Political forms are the shadows of economic realities. Democracy is the political form of a community which produces goods by a colossal concentration of human labour ; dictatorship appears in the modern world when human labour ceases to be as important as the machine. In an age of technicians and workerless factories full of automatic machinery political democracy is ultimately doomed.

A paragraph full of *non sequiturs*, you will say. Why should the coming of technicians and automatic factories force a change of political forms upon mankind ?

For precisely the same reason as a world of ice forced the penguin's wing upon the penguin. For the same reason as is to be found throughout history dominating the changes of human relationships.

Consider the last thousand years of human relationships : first, there was the feudal landlord and his serf, working perforce upon his master's land. One man's hand was against his neighbour's ; each lord lived on a little hill in a fortress and climbed the next hill at night-time to steal his neighbour's crops and cattle. The serf was glad to be a slave, since his lord gave him protection. It was a valid and reasonable contract : the lord got the serf's services and the serf got the lord's protection.

It was valid and reasonable because there was no alternative. Imagine a serf setting up on his own ;

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

suppose he found a patch of unclaimed land to cultivate ; what chance would he have to garner his crops ? Somebody would steal them and imprison him or kill him.

But it was not only valid and reasonable, it was also right and proper. Out of this economic arrangement grew all sorts of standards of good and evil : good lords and bad lords, good serfs and bad serfs ; but always lords and serfs ; there was no other way of being good or bad except in the station in which you found yourself.

And if nothing new had happened that would have remained the way of living to this day. There would not have been tranquillity, of course. There would have been quarrels between serfs and lords, and between lords and overlords, and one day one man would have been up and another day he would have been humbled ; but the system would not have changed.

What destroyed the system ? What new thing came to upset the balance ? The answer is new human tools ; new types of industry not so closely dependent on the land ; overseas trade ; larger scale marketing. These led to the establishment of towns in which the new occupations could be carried out, and the overlords and kings saw a great advantage to themselves in these towns and put them under their protection. That is to say, the town became a force used by the feudal king or high baron to keep his subordinates in order ; the town was a weapon of value in the clash of classes growing out of feudal organization. It was proclaimed that any serf who escaped to the town and set up in useful industrial labour there would be protected from his outraged landlord. At once an alternative to the feudal contract presented itself. There was something else a man could be beside a good or a bad

## LEFT OR RIGHT?

serf; he could be a good townsman or a bad one. A change of economic tools had forced a change of political and ethical ideas. The town was not merely an escape from servitude on the land, it was also an escape from the whole standard of values that had hitherto existed.

In due course the town developed in response to the evolution of new tools and saw the coming of its own types of slavery. As industry became more and more complicated its practitioners had to be organized into classes one tyrannizing over the other, until the guilds rose to power and limited the opportunities for a man to set up in independence and freedom.

Thus the fresh young freedom that the town offered to the feudal world evolved into a new tyranny, bearing down once more on certain classes and therefore filled with the seeds of revolution and of a new slavery. The worker had escaped from the tyranny of landlordism, but out of his new tools had come a new and perhaps worse tyranny, a tyranny which increased as the tools of his labour became more complicated.

For a time the worker owned his tools, though the position of the journeyman and apprentice in the old guild system was probably not as free as some guild socialists looking backward have imagined. At least he had to ask nobody any permission to work; he did not have to slave for the owner of land, he owned his tools and could freely get his raw material and sell his finished product in a fairly open market.

But that could only last while tools were simple and inexpensive. There came a time when costly and complicated machinery was invented which needed capital to possess, and against it you could not possibly compete. You could still weave clothing with your hands, but how could you compete profitably with one

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

pair of hands against the output of a hundred mechanical hands working in a factory and turning out a hundred pieces of clothing for every one you could produce ? There was no alternative for the worker ; he had to throw away his simple tools and sell himself to the man who owned a factory ; that or starve.

Since the owners of factories had a monopoly of fruitful tools they could dictate their own terms ; which were, to pay just so much as would keep body and soul together and by maintaining a pool of starving unemployed to resist all attempts to improve wages. You had to take their terms or become one of the unemployed ; you were a slave to the man who owned the tools into which your simple hand implements had evolved. Once more the evolution of tools and technical knowledge changed completely the relationships between man and man.

But tools evolved still further and more and more skill was required so that the worker should not wreck the delicate machinery. A class of skilled and educated technicians was called forth by the evolving tools of industry. The skilled worker not only learned how not to wreck his master's machinery, he learned how to use his education to combine with his fellows to get more and more privileges for his class.

From the advent of skilled work needing education capitalism had to fight a rearguard action against advancing labour. Labour had numbers on its side and combination. Moreover, the town capitalist bought the support of his workers so as to use it against his enemies the landlords ; whigs flirted with radicals to make the liberal parties of the last century. The educated worker gradually forced governments to redress grievances ; but his efforts were confined to trying to get an ever larger proportion of the gains of

## LEFT OR RIGHT?

industry. He did not try to upset the forms of society by possessing himself of the tools of industry ; he was content to leave them in his employer's hands.

New forms of capitalism came into being with further mechanical advances. Mass production altered the very bases of orthodox capitalism by threatening the world with a glut of products beyond what the market could absorb. It was new machinery that made mass production possible, and out of it there came inevitably the new economic theories of men like Ford. Instead of paying the worker as little as possible, the new capitalist, forced to alter his tactics by the evolution of tools, paid him as much as possible, so that the worker might have the money to buy the product of mass-production factories.

Meanwhile social democracy had shot its bolt ; the evolution of tools sprung a surprise on mankind by weakening the power of the proletariat within the state. Until the coming of mass production the worker, organized in his trade unions had been becoming more and more powerful politically because of his increasing economic importance ; but now there came a change. Long before depression set in, in the U.S.A. for example, the proletariat, the industrial worker, was beginning to decrease in actual numbers. That was the significance of the twenties of this century : rapidly increasing industrial output combined with fewer and fewer workers in place of workers with a vote, machines, the ideal slaves.

Where did the lost workers go ? Very many of them found their way into the middle class. They became salesmen, middle men, distributors in the wild race to find new markets ; they educated their children for the professions, unprofitably multiplying lawyers without briefs, doctors without patients. Some of

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

them, it is true, sank downwards into new pools of unemployed against whose wrath society had to protect itself by giving doles and social insurance. The evolution of tools diminished the workers and increased the middle classes—the office staffs, the salesmen and distributors—since man's ingenuity had begun to solve the problem of producing goods only to find the problem of distributing them become more and more difficult. And at the same time this swelling middle class itself began to suffer. The "little man" was the first to go. With mass production came inevitably mass distribution—the huge department store, the chain store, the trade combine. Capitalism turned around and welcomed what previously it had fought bitterly, the trust, and allowed it to destroy the small business. In spite of the increasing class of innumerable shareholders, new ways of organizing company control concentrated the real power in very few hands.

What has all this meant to political democracy? It has meant the breakdown of the compromises between incompatible groups within the community which lasted through the nineteenth century and until the war; the compromises of balanced would-be dictatorships that were willing to be democratic because they could not get their own way altogether and were afraid of the other groups getting theirs unless they met with their enemy in the way. And once the democratic compromise broke down, society was revealed as a mass of economic classes with incompatible desires all waiting for an opportunity to spring at their enemies' throats.

Moreover, every tenet of orthodox nineteenth-century capitalism has been thrown overboard in a desperate effort to save the day: *laissez-faire*, the free market, rugged individualism, free competition, where in the world are they to be found to-day? In their

## LEFT OR RIGHT?

place are combines fixing their prices and their profits, monopolies, trade restrictions, planned economies of every sort, interference of government in every branch of commerce. In place of the political compromise called democracy there is the dictatorship of the most powerful class ; and, owing to the evolution of tools, that class is by no means always the worker class, but often the disgruntled middle class, rebellious it is true but controlled ruthlessly by the small concentrated group of its economic masters.

Meanwhile the old-fashioned politicians persist in telling us that if only we could get out of this depression as we have got out of so many in the past, all will go well again. If you ask what has allowed capitalism to surmount previous depressions, they may tell you the growth of a new industry. If you ask what new industry is on the horizon to help capitalism out of this depression, they may suggest aeroplanes or air-conditioning ; but in practice they are falling back on a very old industry, armaments, knowing nevertheless that that way lies suicide for capitalism.

The truth is that there is no peaceful or compromising way out of our present troubles, because once more the evolution of tools has produced a revolutionary situation by destroying the validity of the old ways. Suppose by opening up Mars as a market the great industrial countries could increase production to the level of the late twenties : millions of men would still walk the streets unemployed, their jobs having been taken from them by the advancing skill of the machines. The machines have made the whole structure of capitalism obsolete.

It is because of this that old-fashioned democratic capitalism is doomed to be killed by enemies either from the left or from the right. It cannot survive



anywhere. Although Italy, Germany and Russia are the only large countries so far to have rebelled, tendencies in all the other countries are already set in the same direction : new deals, planned economies, national governments, call them what you may, they are all timidly respectable ways of saying that the old capitalism and its political dress, democracy, have been made obsolete by the evolution of new forms of tools.

24

Germany, Britain, France, Russia, the United States, Japan—what course will they take in their flight from democracy ? Since the initiative in world politics at present has passed to Germany we will begin with her and make our sixth prophecy :

GERMANY WILL KEEP OUT OF WAR AS LONG AS POSSIBLE, BUT WILL FINALLY ATTACK RUSSIA UNLESS CHECKED BY ENGLAND AND FRANCE, IN WHICH CASE SHE WILL BECOME THE NEXT GREAT COMMUNIST STATE.

Neither human intelligence, nor human stupidity brought Hitler to power in Germany. In so far as human stupidity contributed, it was the stupidity of the men who made the treaty of Versailles. Given the necessary economic consequences of that treaty the collapse of democracy in Germany was bound to follow.

Any attempt to carve a society into an artificial political pattern which is out of key with economic reality is bound to fail ; that is what happened in Germany after the war. Social democracy dictated by political necessity tried to perform a hopeless task. Only by active help from Germany's ex-enemies could it be made to work ; but thanks to political hatred the help was not forthcoming. Instead the Allies did

## LEFT OR RIGHT?

everything necessary to ensure the breakdown of the democratic compromise in Germany.

It did not suit them to help the social democrats through their difficulties. They gave them an impossible task; and in due course the democratic compromise broke down and the initiative passed to the middle class, technically educated for skilled work and at the same time denied all prospect of future prosperity. Impossible conditions, bitter memories, the intransigent policy of France—result, aggressive nationalism.

The reader would do well to remember that unless he is a Jew or a Communist, he would almost certainly be an enthusiastic supporter of Hitler if he were a German. And even if he were a Communist it is by no means certain that he would not be wearing a brown shirt; for those Germans whose communism was based not on reason but on emotion and irritation crossed over in thousands. Given the conditions which govern life in Germany to-day Hitlerism is the inevitable creed of the majority; if we persist in regarding it as a Teutonic madness we cannot but be misled about future possibilities. It is the inevitable form of society wherever the democratic compromise breaks down and leaves the initiative, thanks to the effects of mass production, with the middle classes.

Here are the indisputable facts upon which we must base our understanding of Germany's future:

1. Capitalism in Germany is rapidly moving towards bankruptcy and in a mad world of tariffs and trade restrictions will not be able to recover itself.

2. Life in Germany to-day is already nearer the bone than it has been in America or England throughout the Depression. There are food shortage, bread lines, unemployment, hunger.

3. The only thing that is keeping employment from

collapsing altogether is the vast volume of rearmament. Hitler is not primarily rearming for war, but to reduce the number of starving men and their discontent. Of course, this cannot go on for ever.

4. Opposition is likely to develop in two different directions. First, the old army class may throw over Hitler, once he has achieved the rearmament of the country. This would mean very little to Europe in the long run, but it is a likely interim stage of German development.

5. Far more important, there is the menace of Communism. Where are the millions who voted Communist before Hitler came to power? They are biding their time underground, or wearing brown shirts for excellent reasons of their own. They are distributing eighty or more subversive sheets week in week out. The desperate espionage of the Nazis cannot stop them.

6. The Nazi economic policy is a mixture of two incompatible elements. First, the big capitalists are using the movement in a last desperate effort to hold on; for we must never forget that though the Nazis exploit the grievances of the small man and the lower middle classes, the big stick of the great capitalist magnates is behind. Second, in order to get the support of the disgruntled workers, the Nazi programme contains certain very radical elements, and some day these supporters may demand that this part of the programme be carried out. That will be the moment of strain.

7. Over against that moment of strain the Nazis are preparing, as we know, the gambler's throw of war. The evolution of the tools of war has made it impossible that a German government should ever risk a war in western Europe if any other outlet is at all possible,

## LEFT OR RIGHT?

since aerial attack would destroy the morale of the civilian population; and this is the reason for the deliberate preparation of a crusade against Russia.

8. Events in France have shown that for this crusade Germany cannot rely on the support of France. France is not likely to attack Germany in defence of Russia, but on the other hand, as we shall see in a moment, French opinion is less anti-communist than it is anti-fascist. Since nothing can be done with France, Germany will try to detach England from the French *entente*, and evidently hopes for support from large sections of the British public. In this Germany is probably overestimating the influence of people like Lords Rothermere and Beaverbrook and Lady Houston. It is notorious that Germany is stupid in diagnosing foreign and particularly British opinion, and she is preparing to make some serious blunders in this direction once again.

9. Germany, however, is perfectly right in seeing that her one chance is to supplant the organization of the League of Nations by an organization of the world into two camps, the communist and the anti-communist. In the attempt to mobilize world public opinion along these lines it may prove that the fatal error has been the raising of the issue of anti-semitism. It will at least ensure the withholding of U.S.A. support from any pro-German, anti-Russian bloc, especially as Germany is playing for alliance with and in the interests of Japan.

10. It is nevertheless certain that when collapse comes to the Nazi regime several countries will do all that is possible to prevent the alternative of a communist Germany. That anything practical will then remain to be done is, however, very doubtful. For it is not only in Germany that things are moving. The initiative may very well be with Germany at present,

thanks to the weak foreign policy of the most unpatriotic government England has ever possessed ; but several very important developments recently have shown how Germany is likely to be checkmated.

Let us turn to France.

France's policy, so often the despair of liberal fair-minded opinion, may determine the fate of capitalism. For the traditional anti-German policy is ideally suited to lead into an anti-fascist policy ; and in so far as Germany carves out for herself the rôle of saviour of capitalism France will lean towards the left.

The crisis of capitalist finance in France cannot be much longer delayed ; we shall see in the next few years inflation and the abandonment of the gold standard. This may very well happen long before this book can be published. But the really important thing in France's contribution to the next stage of world history has already happened. It is the establishment of the Front Populaire.

The traditional foreign policy of France is exceedingly simple to formulate ; it is opposition to the nation that has thrice invaded her ; the maintenance of a balance of power in favour of France against Germany. The orthodox French diplomatist has a one-track mind and to him world peace and French security are synonymous. The League of Nations is merely a means of making France feel safe.

The Frenchman would like nations to behave as some physicists believe electrons and protons sometimes behave, to fly together and cancel out in the complete annihilation of matter. If Russian communism and German Nazism could annihilate one another and leave not a wrack behind, French statesmanship would feel that heaven on earth had been established. Next to this impossible dream the best

## LEFT OR RIGHT?

hope for France is to keep Nazi Germany immobilized but with no risk of its dissolving into communism.

Against this unchanging background of French policy consider the crises into which we have all been led by the two dictators, Mussolini and Hitler.

Traditional French politicians would like to keep Mussolini up their sleeve as a counterblast to Hitler : hence their hesitation under Laval over imposing sanctions. But this policy means the destruction of the League of Nations and with the League the eventual destruction of capitalism by war. At this moment the Front Populaire steps in and the whole picture of international affairs is changed.

For what France and the Front Populaire have now brought about is an alliance of all the forces of liberal capitalist democracy with the forces of socialism and communism against the dictatorships of the right. In this way the League of Nations, from being merely the bulwark of capitalism, an organization to prevent its suicide by war, looks like being transformed into an anti-fascist league. The essential democracy of the French genius is once more standing the world in good stead.

It is of course by no means certain yet that French democracy will triumph ; liberal opinion in England, still ashamed of its contribution to Versailles and anxious to make amends, persists in giving Germany the benefit of the doubt and cannot make up its mind that to expel Italy from the League is a more reasonable policy than to coax Germany into it.

The future of a dozen nations depends upon the relative strength of the right and the left wing in French political life. If the French fascist parties could dominate the field the way would be made easy for the German anti-Russian crusade ; France would supply Germany with economic support, and violent

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

differences of opinion in England would immobilize her from the conflict ; for, however little he may like communism, no British worker is going to aid in the destruction of a people's government elsewhere, so that the would-be British fascist crusaders will not be able to give Germany anything more tangible than a good press.

But every indication is that the shadow of outworn political rivalry, the tradition of enmity with Germany, will destroy the chance of French reaction taking up this rôle. For precisely those people who would be most likely to applaud a fascist international are the people who cannot get over their traditional anti-Germanism. And this is of course the weakness of Fascism in the international field, that it is nurtured on national hatreds which must separate natural allies. Thus Germany and Italy are economically in an identical stage of development, but politically they have opposite aims. Two nations with an equal similarity of economic development *but to the left* would be allies. This is a vital consideration for those who wish to assess the relative chances of the right and the left in the struggle for survival.

The Front Populaire is not only free from incompatibilities within its own programme ; it is ready to combine with popular fronts in all other countries. It should therefore be able to maintain democratic forms against the danger from the right, at least until Hitlerism in Germany has met its inevitable fate.

France therefore, after having for many years been the chief begetter of reaction throughout the world, after having created Nazism and made things difficult for democracy everywhere in Central Europe, once more is preparing to lead world opinion against the monster of reactionary nationalism.

## LEFT OR RIGHT ?

Our seventh prophecy, therefore, is this :

THE ONLY REPLY TO THE MENACE OF DICTATORSHIPS OF THE RIGHT IS THE POPULAR FRONT. ITS SUCCESS IN FRANCE WILL GIVE FRANCE THE MORAL LEADERSHIP OF THE WORLD FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS AND MAY CHECK THE WARLIKE AIMS OF GERMANY IN A WAY THAT THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS COULD NEVER DO.

Already, as the Spanish Press cried joyfully after the last French elections, there are no Pyrenees ; from the Straits of Dover to the Straits of Gibraltar there is a solid sentiment against dictatorship from the right. While our politicians in England still try to balance Mussolini with Hitler and to drive bargains with dictators, the statesmen who will take their place will see that it is not worth while building flimsy structures based on keeping Austria independent ; but that Western Democracy must logically combine with Russia to oppose Central Reaction.

In this task they have been helped by the Russian edict calling a truce between communism and socialism throughout the world in an effort to save us all from Fiery Crosses, Lightning Flashes, Swastikas and Fasciæ.

Critics of communism can bring strong arguments in support of the thesis that the communist parties of central Europe in particular are largely responsible for the triumph of reaction by refusing to help to make socialism and social democracy workable. It is at least true that the feud between communists and socialists in certain countries has made the task of political capitalism very much easier, and it must often have done the reactionary's heart good to see anti-war meetings break up in strife between the participants.



## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

Whether this sort of thing was necessary, whose fault it was, whether common sense could have avoided it or whether a decree from Moscow had to be waited for to bring it to an end, all these questions may be left to historians of the two left movements. What is important to us is that socialist-communist strife is at an end ; the logic of events has substituted for theoretic disputes on tactics, a very practical alliance against war and right party dictatorships, and the most successful of these alliances is to be seen in France and Spain. When the same common sense has united our own pig-headed radicals the way will be open for our eighth prophecy :

BRITAIN, FRANCE AND SPAIN IN ALLIANCE WITH  
RUSSIA AND. SMALLER SO-CALLED NEUTRAL  
NATIONS WILL OPPOSE THE DESTROYERS OF  
DEMOCRACY ON THE RIGHT.

For one of the things that few foresaw in 1917 is that the true enemy of democracy was bound eventually to appear from the Right and not from the Left. We are all apt to imagine that a revolution is unidirectional; but in practice most left revolutions turn out to be disguised and precipitate evolution, while the true destruction comes from the opposite direction. In other words, it is hard for the unprejudiced observer to deny that to-day Russia represents motion in accordance with inexorable natural law, while Germany represents a futile and horrible attempt to hold up and reverse what is inevitable and therefore good. That we shall not necessarily follow the same path as Russia is no reason for making the unpardonable error of imitating the madness on the Right.

What of Italy? Her method of celebrating 1936 makes it necessary to accord her more consideration

## LEFT OR RIGHT?

than is probably justifiable according to eternal values. Her pathetic adventure into imperialism a hundred years too late has been useful in ways both great and small, largely as an object-lesson.

To begin with a small piece of usefulness: Italy called the bluff of those naval experts who laughed at the possible effects of the new tools of war on their darling battleships. Most British admirals insisted that aeroplanes could not wreck a battle fleet; they seemed to regard the suggestion as an unscrupulous means of deflecting money from the navy to the R.A.F. But directly things began to look uncomfortable in the Mediterranean they hurried off their expensive toys to Alexandria, to be as far out of the way of Mussolini's aeroplanes as possible. And ever since, people have been writing letters to *The Times* suggesting that before we spend any more millions on leviathans it would be as well to see by practical experiment how easy it is to sink them from the air.

More important has been the effect of Italy's civilizing expedition on the League of Nations. It is absurd to suggest that the League has been killed; it has been transformed into something more than a debating society. It remains the last effort of capitalism to save itself from suicide in war; but it is being reconstituted on the realization that the major international danger to capitalism is not communism but fascism. With a League which contains neither Germany nor Japan and which is forced to chastise Italy however mildly, capitalist democracy can breathe again. The three nations which will be forced to make war if they are to maintain their present governments are being slowly but surely isolated and they will not be able to use the League as a weapon to achieve their ends.

Of course, there will be an increasing agitation in

certain directions in England to substitute the power of Germany for that of Russia within the League, an agitation that may have had some temporary success by the time this book is published ; but in a very few years the economic strength, and therefore the military strength, of Russia will be so much greater than that of Germany, that such an attempt is bound to fail. The Italian adventure has been useful in another way. It has focused world attention on the fundamental weakness of right-wing dictatorships, namely their eventual need of war. Our liberal ostriches have tried to think that the glorification of war in Italy and Germany, the marching and the drums, the uniforms and the rallies, were some sort of harmless "moral equivalent" for war itself ; that just as Spaniards enjoy bullfights and keep out of wars, so with the circus activities of black shirts and brown. But when Mussolini had to choose between going down in a sordid financial crisis and burning down the house over his head he chose the spectacular.

The ultimate result will depend on one or two things which will happen in England and France in the next few months. The democratic front is only just beginning to harden ; hitherto the Italian situation has been complicated by the fact that large bodies of opinion in both the great democratic countries have toyed with the idea of playing off one dictator against the other. There is still, as we have already said, a tendency to regard the future of Europe as bound up with the freedom of Austria, which had to be guaranteed by setting Mussolini as a watchdog over Hitler. So long as that is considered a relevant international policy the logic of events will be held up.

There are many people who imagine that the sole alternative to fascism in Italy is communism. This is

not so. We can safely prophesy that Italy will not be a communist state until after Germany, France, several of the smaller central European states, and England. The reason is economic ; Italy, for all her blustering and bombast, cannot in the long run do anything that is opposed to the wishes of the more powerful states of Europe. In this she is in the same position as England herself.

Italy and the British Isles are alike in being unable by any manœuvre—political, industrial or economic—to make themselves self-supporting. At the present moment France<sup>1</sup> and England would boycott, with real sanctions, any communist revolution in Italy. If Mussolini ceases to be useful as a foil against Hitler, he will be allowed to proceed to his own ruin along the road of national bankruptcy. His bank dare not publish figures, his exchange is a fake, wedding rings are indications of national weakness as well as of patriotic hysteria, he has gained nothing but deserts and sullen hatred in Abyssinia. Mussolini will soon find that it does not profit a man to gain the whole of Ethiopia and lose his own economic solvency.

But the doom of fascia will not be allowed to mean the triumph of sickle and hammer : a military dictatorship perhaps under General Balbo and veiled by some sort of shadowy parliamentary form, and an emphasis on the King being himself again, will be the sort of bargain that foreign capitalism will try to drive in exchange for loans to save their Italian fellow capitalists from immediate doom. Meanwhile we may be sure that by its recent escapade fascism has dug for itself in Africa a deeper grave than that which would have been dug otherwise by inexorable law.

<sup>1</sup> This paragraph was written before the French Elections. The march of events has already followed the lines prophesied.

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

As for the Italian people, they will have to resort to an economic and political stomach pump before they can get rid of the poison of propaganda sufficiently to follow sane paths of evolution.

### 25

Germany, France and Italy are in the limelight at present, which justifies taking them first among the nations whose futures can be prophesied, but it is natural that an Englishman should be most concerned with the future of England. England is, as usual, something of a paradox : on the one hand there is no country where the capitalist system is more obviously doomed by the logic of events, and yet there is no country in which revolution and communism are more "unthinkable".

Let us put down the minimum indisputable facts :

1. The present population of England can only be supported by a large export trade based on an essential raw material, coal. But coal is no longer an essential raw material as it was in the days when England was undisputed leader in the industrial world. And under capitalism there is not the faintest chance of international trade reviving ; if only because the old importing markets have become exporting competitors.

2. England is no longer isolated and protected by the sea. In the face of modern tools of war she is a superb medieval fortress, a tourist paradise and a military death-trap. Her population might not surrender to bombers over London, but if not it would be because it would have already been forced to surrender by starvation.

3. A communist revolution would be impossible in England so long as Germany and France are strong

## LEFT OR RIGHT?

capitalist states, but it is equally true to say that capitalism in England will be doomed once the continent of Europe has become communist. Thus in considering England's future we have to avoid all analogies with the time when rival nationalisms on the continent could be used to secure a gradual evolution of England's history along lines of the enlightened self-interest of her governing class.

Her immediate future will be governed by the rapidly crystallizing communist-fascist division and her ultimate future will be conditioned by the way in which this division is finally liquidated. According as Europe is fascist or communist so England will be fascist or communist.

4. The relatively peaceful evolution of England's political and economic life has been due to the way in which reforms have almost invariably come at the hands of the conservative groups who have opposed them for a generation or so. The sort of thing which in America has been greeted as "bolshevism" when proposed by the Roosevelt administration has long ago been accepted in England by reactionaries as part of the necessary process of agreeing with your enemy in the way. There must however be an end to this sooner or later; and the vested interests will have to fight with their backs to the wall.

The surprisingly strong position that England seems to be in at the beginning of 1936 is due not to sound industrial and commercial prospects, but to a financial "good-name"; a rigid obedience to the rules of capitalist business morality in a world where such obedience is rare. Capitalism in England owes its strength to the fact that capitalists elsewhere have a greater faith in English capitalism than in their own.

Its continued strength is dependent on capitalism

elsewhere being able to defend itself against communism on the one hand, and unorthodox monkeying with the rules of capitalism on the other. Directly the capitalist world abandons the rules of the game capitalist England's position is undermined.

When this happens a form of fascism will grow up in England also. It may not be as theatrical as what we have seen in Germany and Italy ; it may preserve the outward signs of decency—though recent failures of the police to protect anti-fascist meetings and to stop petty Jew-baiting give us cause to doubt it—but it will be as ruthless. Those who remember what a few months of war did to mild, friendly human beings even in England will find it easier than younger people to imagine the psychological change that brings with it contempt for the civilized decencies.

5. England has retained democratic institutions longer than Germany, Italy or Russia, and will continue to do so after Spain and perhaps France have joined the rest, because her economic structure is sounder. But this means that the next stages of her evolution are dependent not on herself so much as upon outside forces. Democracy has collapsed sooner on the continent because it was weaker there, but with the collapse of European democracy comes the end of England's chance of playing off one nation against another. The net result is this : if Europe is fascist England will be forced to become fascist also ; if Europe is communist England will be communist.

6. Those whose natural wishes are father to the thought so that they hope that in England at least democratic amenities and graces may linger, should remember that in England also the whole strength of democratic capitalism is labouring to make sense of

## LEFT OR RIGHT ?

a system in which the sentence we have quoted twice before, lies at the base of economic life :

Natural causes have again improved the wheat position, when schemes for the artificial raising of prices failed. In 1934 the drought in the United States assisted producers to obtain more remunerative prices, and in 1935 adverse weather conditions in Argentina resulted in a further improvement of the world wheat situation.

Even though we may wish to preserve the amenities of the democratic compromise, how can we hope to do so if they entail faithfulness to such a doctrine after all the rest of the world has abandoned it ?

But if one has to assume the final collapse of capitalism in England it is hard to prophesy the steps in terms of parties and personalities that will lead to it. English public opinion is always fluid and ready to find its level in all sorts of "unwritten" coalitions. At the beginning of 1936, thanks to Italy, there was a powerful coalition of the conservative, liberal, socialist and even communist parties, all intent on saving capitalism from the suicide of war. The only opposition to sanctions except for certain radical mystics came from the extreme right.

We have said that the only real division in the field of international affairs is rapidly becoming the division between communist and fascist states, with the liberal centrists forced to support one or the other ; in England the line of cleavage lies directly down the middle of the conservative party, with half that party and all the rest gradually forced closer and closer to a policy which involves assisting communism against fascism. When the issue becomes specifically economic rather than political the division may come elsewhere, but at the moment <sup>1</sup> it would be true to say that if the

<sup>1</sup> This was written before the retreat from sanctions.



Socialists had won the last election they could not have done better from their own point of view than send Anthony Eden to Geneva to represent them and the country at large.

It is part of the irony of the present situation that the gentleman who was largely responsible for the formation of a national government, Mr. J. Ramsay MacDonald, finds himself well to the right of the line of cleavage within the Cabinet. Whether he knows it or not, Mr. MacDonald's attitude to the Italian question at least seems to have been pro-fascist; and if there was the least chance of anyone listening to his advice England would probably be pledged to the policy advocated by the *Daily Mail* of "finding out what the Soviet would have us do and doing the opposite".

The best that can be hoped for England is that in spite of press barons and other emotional fascists she will not be forced to join the German crusade against Russia; that she will be able to scrape along without getting entangled on either side in the period of European readjustment, and that in ten years' time, the Russian experiment having evolved into a successful socialist democracy, a government largely composed of men like Eden will accept communism as a *fait accompli* and adopt it in the name of British conservative traditions. In the process a few die-hards will have to be discreetly shot, but the change over should be as bloodless as the Russian one would have been but for allied and "white" intervention.

But if the so-called isolationists or the pro-fascists, who are often the same people, were to get their way, there is every prospect of capitalism ending with all the horrors of war, civil strife, brutalized human nature and general starvation.

## LEFT OR RIGHT?

If we wish to see a clear example of how the evolution of tools, and the organization of economic life which goes with it, can alter the whole political attitude of a community, we cannot do better than compare the England which "saved Europe" from the Napoleonic domination with the England which is determined not to save Europe or even itself from the far greater danger of modern dictators.

Why is it that a Government with an enormous majority able to do what it likes, composed of the very men who have traditionally turned "patriotism" into a concept of party politics, is as "unpatriotic" as the present "National Government"?

Here we have the professional patriots arm in arm with the professional super-patriots of the Press allowing every country that thinks fit to insult and flout the country which they love with such theoretical passion. They ask Hitler whether he will tell them exactly what he means to do with Europe, and wait patiently for a reply that is evidently only going to be launched from the air in letters of flame. They try to get Mussolini to agree to a quiet little partitioning of Africa, and when he prefers to take all that is going for himself, they make a show of stopping him, but draw back from any action that might annoy him. They issue mustard-coloured pamphlets telling us what to do with ourselves when gassed from the air, mildly mentioning that they intend to ask the enemy to be good enough to agree not to bomb us, whatever else it may do to us. They bully Germany into exasperation and then when Germany turns and does a little bullying on her own, tell France that it is best to believe gentlemen like Hitler, simply because it might upset them to be doubted in their most transparent lies. They talk of the menace to English

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

institutions, and are so nervous of subversive elements that they make it illegal for anyone to discuss the Sermon on the Mount with any member of the armed forces ; and yet they hold the proud record of being the first government for centuries under which it is not safe for a Jew to go about his lawful business. They are so impressed by the new science of political bullying abroad that they protect the would-be bullies here with cordons of police and prevent anyone demonstrating against Sir Oswald Mosley. . . . Stands England where she did ?

What is the cause of this astonishing decline of traditional virtues ? Why should you and I, if we are English, have to explain ourselves and our country in every corner of the globe ? Why is there scarcely a country in the world which respects or fears us ?

It is not because some mysterious racial taint has seeped in to vitiate the red blood of the true-born Englishman. It is not because luxury, or Hollywood, or Jewish low standards of morality, or irreligion, or the Pope, or any of the other time-honoured excuses have destroyed our stamina, our moral fibre. It is because we are no longer God's chosen people in the only sense that those words can be used, the metaphorical sense that we are not the fortunate beneficiaries of natural law. The evolution of human tools has changed our environment so that we cannot any longer lord it over creation, and our government, still a capitalist government, does not put to sea on an ocean where all is plain sailing for capitalism. It has to face rough weather. It cannot have a reasonable, a consistent or a dignified policy, for the irrationality, the inconsistency and the lack of dignity of the last stages of capitalist evolution have inevitably come to rock the boat. It must, in so far as it serves capi-

## LEFT OR RIGHT?

talism, fawn upon Hitler and Mussolini, for they are about the only friends that are left to capitalism. It can no longer hope for anything from the liberal idealism which seemed to go with capitalism in the palmy days when Robert Browning, Quaker bankers and the Manchester philosophers knew that God was in the counting house and all was right with the world.

Nobody can possibly imagine that Mr. Baldwin, Sir John Simon and Sir Samuel Hoare like to hobnob with the canonized house-painter ; but beggars cannot be choosers and a friend in need is a friend indeed.

And so we can only prophesy of England that :

THE RELATIVE SUCCESS OF THE DEMOCRATIC COMPROMISE IN ENGLAND WILL PREVENT A STRONG LEAD IN ANY DIRECTION. THE INCOMPATIBLE AIMS OF CAPITALIST DEMOCRACY WILL KEEP HER FROM TAKING THE MORAL LEAD AGAINST THE DICTATORSHIPS OF THE RIGHT, BUT THE PRESSURE OF HER PACIFIC WORKER CLASS AND WHAT IS LEFT OF MIDDLE-CLASS LIBERAL TRADITION WILL PREVENT ANY ALLIANCE WITH GERMANY AGAINST RUSSIA. WHILE WE HAVE A NATIONAL GOVERNMENT ANY NATION WILL BE ABLE TO DO WHATEVER IT LIKES WITHOUT PAYING ATTENTION TO US.

## 26

In this last stage of our Epoch of Stupidity the part played by the United States of America is peculiar. Apparently the most highly developed of all capitalist systems, it has had less influence on the fate of capitalism than any other of the greater nations. Logically we ought all to be wondering what America will do ; actually we are more concerned with

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

what Germany or France or even Italy will do. America has less influence, moral or economic, on the rest of the world than many countries far poorer and far less developed. Why is this? And what do we conclude from it as to America's future?

An analogy may be drawn between biological evolution and the life of nations: easy material conditions permit the growth of a wealth of living forms; strenuous material conditions weed out most of the varieties and reveal the true trend of evolution. So with nations; abundance of raw material, land, power, opportunity, breed a richly variegated national life, but hard times alone can ensure the evolution of institutions to higher forms. American political institutions are weak and underdeveloped because they have never been put to the test of national danger and economic poverty. In particular the bounteous twenties of this century reduced America to the condition of a mad-house; the most fortunate economic conditions ever known by a human community meant that whatever mistakes an individual or the community chose to make they were forgiven them.

Anybody could sell anybody anything; and not unnaturally Americans imagined that their prosperity was due to peculiar virtues inherent in them and in their political institutions. Actually those institutions were so weak and worthless that they could not survive even fantastically good luck; and now they are faced with a very bad run of luck indeed.

In a sentence, America's fate has been to be too prosperous to develop sound institutions. Instead of being provided with reserve strength to take the strain, her political habits have buckled at the critical moment.

In 1936 though America can "show the world" still in every field of mechanical and scientific inven-

## LEFT OR RIGHT?

tion, she has not a single contribution to make to the rehabilitation of the economic life of communities; for while she has invented and used tools, she has not paid any regard at all to the effect of the evolution of tools upon the cultural and political life of man.

That the U.S.A. is potentially the wealthiest part of the world's surface cannot be denied, nor that eventually its inhabitants are bound to enjoy the highest material standard of living. But this has not prevented the U.S.A. from coming nearer than any other big country, not excepting Russia in the worst days of interventionism, to complete collapse.

Why is this? Because the inhabitants of the U.S.A. have refused to accept the cultural consequences of the tools they have invented.

For all their pride in their own speed they are politically in the horse and buggy days. When under the promising title of a New Deal they introduce reforms long found necessary in other countries, their constitutional weakness prevents them from being used. Apparently nothing can sever the umbilical cord which ties America to the parochial ideas of the Fathers of Their Country.

This, the most powerful industrial country the world has ever seen, refuses to give its central government control over questions of work and wages. This, the biggest business concern in history, clings to a system which prevents the balancing of a business-like budget; for if the President balances his budget one day, Congress can add billions of dollars to the expenditure a week later, and the Supreme Court dock the credit side of billions more, by declaring some law or other, upon which the budgeting depends, to be unconstitutional.

This, the community which is far in advance of

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

any other in the use of tools and of natural power, makes a moral question of clinging to a constitution made by a group of rural ex-English gentlemen in the eighteenth century with the express object of keeping the America they knew and loved unchanged, and agricultural. This, the community which is more dependent than any other on sound finance, forbids any but an antiquated system of banking which ensures that hundreds of banks will close in well-deserved bankruptcy every year.

This, the community in which "selling insurance" has become a stock joke like mothers-in-law, professes to regard social insurance against unemployment as an act of pauperization, and is forced therefore in this time of crisis to fall back on the amateur bungling of a snooping relief system to prevent downright starvation.

The enormous natural wealth of America allowed the most extravagant capitalism to buy off the criticism of the worker, so that to-day America suffers from the absence of any strong and educated political labour movement. To a thoughtful worker from a European country the average A.F. of L. official must seem a triumph of capitalist planning. Without a labour opposition and without a civil service trained in the spirit of the technician, America faces the period of capitalist crisis. It is not rash to prophesy that within a very brief time

AMERICA WILL FORGET ALL BUT THE CATCH-  
WORDS OF DEMOCRACY AND ENTER INTO A  
RUTHLESS PERIOD OF FASCISM.

The reasons why America will go Fascist can be put briefly as follows :

1. The age of opportunity is gone. There is no

## LEFT OR RIGHT?

more free land and no young man can any longer go west. If he does, he will land up picking lettuces at starvation wages in the Imperial Valley ; that is if he is lucky. If he is less lucky he will find various private armies run by local chambers of commerce waiting to larn him to be a red.

2. The opportunity of frontier days gave way to an age of industrial opportunity. In an epoch of rapidly expanding markets, assisted by the follies of Europe and the war on the one hand, and the coming of the great mass-production industries on the other, any fool could hope to leave the ranks of the workers and become a capitalist on his own. Socialism appealed only to unskilled and seasonal workers ; the rest were looking out for private escapes from wage slavery. In every other country the work begun by middle-class progressive opinion is being continued by the rising power of the worker, conscious of his mission as the leader of social evolution. The capitalized worker of America has yet to build the groundwork of tradition without which he cannot be fit for this rôle. He is only just beginning to realize that his chances of becoming a bourgeois next year have become thin. He is not organized physically or mentally to fight reactionary fascism.

3. One of the most valuable manures for fertilizing the ground for fascism is race prejudice. America is richly manured with this. It is not simply or chiefly the more obvious Negro question : much more important is the way succeeding race immigrations have settled into an economic stratification in which the skilled labourer of the earlier arriving racial stocks feels in a separate caste from the unskilled labourer who belongs to an "inferior race" from the south and east of Europe. As we shall see later, race feel-



ing begins to have social significance only when it is used to fan economic jealousies into flames. At such a time America will have no difficulty in setting its house on fire.

4. The extent to which mass production has been developed in America has inevitably weakened the class which makes the industrial product *vis-à-vis* the class which sells it. While more and more machines replace more and more workers, more and more salesmen, black-coated workers, bourgeois officials, have been called into being. This is the class which has been most hit in the depression, because they had been led to expect more, to regard the world as their oyster ; and they have found themselves deceived.

5. As in Germany, the professional classes have found themselves in a world which offers them very little hope. The American passion for education has overloaded the community with individuals who feel themselves too good to mind machines, but who cannot find the sort of work for which they have prepared themselves.

6. The most enlightened government in the world, however determined it is to right social injustice, cannot function successfully without a fully trained body of technical experts. Again and again England is saved from the bungling of politicians by the scientific common sense of the civil services. America has no civil service capable either intellectually or morally of carrying out the immense amount of planning required by capitalist democracy to save its house from destruction in this period of vast difficulty. And America has no trained level-headed set of working-class officials and socialist economists to take over, as such people have in England taken over, for example, the running of London. The only alternative is muddle,

## LEFT OR RIGHT ?

indecision and all the disappointments out of which fascism comes.

7. The instability of the American population, leading on the one side to many delightful and valuable products with which the more staid conditions of Europe cannot compete, has on the other side prepared precisely the sort of emotional mentality that glories in the theatricality of fascism at its very worst. The land of Mary Baker Eddy, of Aimée Semple McPherson, of Billy Sunday, of Huey Long, Father Coughlin, Dr. Townsend, of camp-fire revivals, the K.K.K., American Legion Conventions, Shriners and the rest will eventually produce a super-Hitler and wallow in the religious mania of a super-Nazi revivalism. Moreover, America can remain outside some of the troubles and entanglements of the rest of the world. Her isolationists are perfectly right in their philosophy ; always assuming American capitalists are prepared to cut their losses in foreign loans and foreign trade and settle down to organizing the home industry on a new footing.

If they are not prepared to see their investments disappear, these gentlemen may insist on a war, probably with Japan ; but it is more likely that isolationism will prevail, until one day America, having thus arrested her development, will awake to find a world gone communist, at least from Vladivostock to Bordeaux. What Mr. Hearst and his readers will do then is an interesting bit of speculation, but we cannot enter into it at this time.

## 27

Let us now sum up the events of the period during which our Age of Stupidity will be liquidated.

The evolution of human tools has dislocated the

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

compromise which we call democracy ; and in every direction we see a rapid development towards forms which are in closer relationship with the demands of the new tools. Humanity has been enjoying a relative truce ; the truce is broken ; the armies are on the march once more ; and there will be no more peace until mankind has settled down to political forms which are logical and practical, given the material conditions forced on us by the tools we have made.

To the hand-to-mouth politician events are a sort of pendulum which he hopes to swing in the way that suits his own philosophy. To the close observer it is clear that there is no pendulum swing, but an irreversible trend of events in one direction. To define that direction one thing is necessary : that is attention to the inevitable laws of social evolution. These are a constant progression towards greater proficiency in the struggle for existence, involving ever more complete organization ; an increasing dominance of the social unit over the individual ; an improved economy of human energy in the doing of all work necessary to the survival of his society ; a conservation and thrift in the use of natural resources ; an elimination of all individual activity harmful or merely useless to the group.

It follows that democracy itself is bound to give way to alternatives which prove more obedient to the laws of evolution, and that of these alternatives only those that can in the long run " deliver the goods " will survive. If we consider that of the two type alternatives to democracy, one, fascism, is indissolubly linked to a nationalism that must lead to war ; and if we realize that, thanks to the nature of the tools of war, war must mean the destruction of any form of capitalist class that resorts to it, we shall see that in

## LEFT OR RIGHT ?

the long run the future is to the other type of alternative, namely communism.

How the Age of Stupidity will be liquidated, and what will happen to some of our communities in the process, we have already seen ; it remains to consider what will happen to the individual when all those political readjustments, which concern this generation, have been made. For what are we struggling ? When the smoke of our battles has blown away and the last little shred of mustard gas dissolved itself into harmless tenuity, what kind of world can our children build out of the ruins of our own ?

Let us preface our picture of this world by reminding the reader once more that it is not a question of painting a delectable picture ; and that if what must be seems deplorable, we can console ourselves by the thought that we shall not be part of it, and that our children will be psychologically made over to enjoy what will come natural to them.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE STATE BECOMES SUPER-BIOLOGIST

28

WE can now turn our attention to a period when human stupidity ceases to be the major factor in shaping the life of the individual.

A reader of history in A.D. 2000 will look back upon a strange story of wisdom increasing, not by education, not by the benevolent dictatorship of superior minds, but by the inevitable and ruthless wearing away of incompetence and error in the mills of evolution.

He will look back to a period distant from him less than a century when statements such as this—and I make no excuse for repeating it once again—seemed reasonable :

Natural causes have again improved the wheat position, when schemes for the artificial raising of prices failed. In 1934 the drought in the United States assisted producers to obtain more remunerative prices, and in 1935 adverse weather conditions in Argentina resulted in a further improvement in the world wheat situation.

He will see that all the sanity and ingenuity of the best brains of the earlier half of the twentieth century could not save a situation so unnatural ; that the imperious demands of the struggle for survival destroyed those who remained content with social units built upon such absurdities ; that when these absurdi-

ties produced the inevitable result of hungry stomachs, those stomachs found blindly the solution which full heads failed to discover. He will see that one community after another found that only by preventing people from freely using their reasons for interfering with the efficiency of society could it survive ; and he will trace the ways in which one community after another became efficient in the struggle for survival, by preventing the individuals composing it from carrying on a struggle between themselves.

Looking back on the forties and fifties of this century, he will thank his stars that he was not alive during the period when individuals had to be forbidden the free use of their minds, because they had not learned that minds are not meant for the ingenious destruction of their neighbours.

He will see that just as a society of ants does not require every individual to function sexually, so a community of men does not require every individual to function as a political being. He may compare the way in which the social habit made many an individual ant sterile for the benefit of the group, with the way in which the social habit confined the use of reason for political and economic questions to the very few.

He will read how many of those who saw this coming feared it as a tyranny and as a degradation of man's dignity ; but he will reflect, first, that in the period when the individual seemed most free he was actually most enslaved ; and, second, that the objectors themselves seemed quite blind to the enslavement of their own intellects by their so-called democratic system of society, when propaganda for base motives obscured every question and poisoned even mankind's greatest achievements, creative art and speculative science.

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

Third, he will reflect that when the community finally forbade the individual political freedom, and put all such questions into the hands of experts, the word "expert" had ceased to be a euphonious synonym for "vested interest" as it had been in the fleeting unsatisfactory days of premature democracy.

And, lastly, he will realize that by depriving the individual of political-economic free choice, society was simply adding one more to the long list of functions that could be done, and better done, by reflex action rather than by conscious volition; that if a man is willing to let his heart beat on its own, without his taking thought, he may just as well let his bread-and-butter problems be solved for him without his taking thought; that indeed by so doing he is set free for a truer individualism, a more satisfying use of his mind. No longer has he to worry as to how his food will get to him, any more than how he will digest it; no longer has he to worry about shelter and protection from the elements, any more than about how to provide a skin for his tissues; all such things come naturally by the working of the social habit; and so, at last, his mind is free.

Free for what? To solve those problems which in 1936 are insoluble, because we do not possess a unified all-powerful authority capable of forcing upon individuals their logical solutions.

We now enter upon the history of how those problems were solved. We leave the Age of Stupidity and enter upon the first stage of the Real Future; a stage which, taking a long view, is only a preparation once more for that which comes after; a stage distinguished by the sacrifice of individualism on the altars of the social habit, a kind of sin-offering for its wicked misuse in the sphere of economic private competition.

## THE STATE BECOMES SUPER-BIOLOGIST

A stage when the all-powerful social unit, commanding utter obedience, plans for a veritable, if delayed, Age of Reason.

We will take some of these great problems which distract our generation and examine their future solutions. And first of all there is the Problem of Population, at once the excuse for ruthlessness offered to humanity by the Mussolinis and expansionists of every colour, and the anxiety of every community which has become civilized enough not to leave human creation to chance and thoughtlessness, and in consequence sees its neighbours growing proportionately more numerous.

### 29

#### PROPHECY NO. XI.

BY A.D. 2000 EVERY COMMUNITY WILL HAVE ADOPTED A PLANNED BIRTH-RATE AND POPULATION WILL BE KEPT AT A FIXED LEVEL BY STATE-CONTROLLED CONTRACEPTION, ABORTION AND STERILIZATION.

There is no better example of how the contradictions of our present economic philosophy make clear thinking impossible than the attitude of otherwise sane people over those questions which are grouped under the ambiguous title "The Population Problem". In many minds the problem means very little else beside the lawfulness, moral or legal, of birth control; and their interest is very often rather personal. But even when we consider the utterances of men and women who approach the question from an impersonal social angle, we find wild special pleading based on all sorts of ulterior motives.

Thus although the "cause" of birth control is a typical "radical" cause, since it attacks both religious



and social orthodox points of view, we find that many of the leaders of the "cause" are reactionary conservatives on every other social issue.

We find this sort of argument: we are having to pay higher and higher taxes for poor law relief and unemployment insurance; it would be much better if all these unemployed people had never been born, but since retro-active birth control is impossible, let us at least see that they have no children. In its most obnoxious form this means that only a man who has an independent income ought to be allowed to enjoy parenthood. Of course he ought not to be allowed the enjoyment of sexual intercourse either, but things being as they are there is no way of preventing that, so let us by all means teach him contraception.

Another poisonous argument is that the higher classes and cream of the population are having smaller and smaller families, and so we shall all be swamped by the masses of an inferior type, who still breed like rabbits. Since the folk in *Who's Who*, the subscribers to the *Morning Post*, and the box-holders at Covent Garden are all nearly sterile, race degeneration has set in, and soon there will be nobody but the offspring of healthy peasants and dock labourers.

Faced with such deplorable points of view, the socialist very often dismisses the idea that overpopulation may be a danger as mere reactionary propaganda. He points out that if the world settled down to a reasonable system of production and distribution there would be no difficulty in feeding billions more human bodies; and he scornfully accuses the capitalist of trying to save his system by eliminating the living witnesses to its failure.

There are some excellent answers to this point of

view from an angle more likely to appeal to the socialist himself than to the capitalist. To begin with, socialism hopes to establish a uniform high standard of living for all alike : now in England to-day there is only one motor-car to every twenty of the population, and yet normal use of those cars entails the death of more than a hundred people a week, not through carelessness merely, but through the overcrowding of the roads. Granted that there could be built quite a number of motoring roads without entirely destroying the remaining amenities of the country, what would be the state of the roads if, let us say, one in five of the population had a car, as will be the case when all have a uniform standard of living. Granted that it would be possible to feed and clothe and give standing room to millions more, where would they put their garages, their flower gardens, their tennis courts and all the other things that under a socialist state should be the possession—if only for use—of every family in England ?

In short, nobody doubts that a maximum population far in excess of the present would be possible were capitalism's house to be put in order ; but would that population be the best in size for the enjoyment of a full life ? It is obvious that below a certain density of population the joys of life are diminished for all alike : if your neighbours are far apart and scattered there is many a thing that you, a human being getting much of your pleasure from crowd activities, would miss ; but, if the earth is black with people, once again many of the joys of life disappear. Somewhere between the two is the optimum population for any community and any area ; an optimum population to be attained and maintained by state control of the birth-rate.

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

It will not be at all certain that the right birth-rate in one part of the world will be suitable elsewhere. England may need one density of population and Russia quite another ; but that there will be an ascertainable optimum density in every case, and that social planning will arrange to achieve it, is certain. For so long as there are separate human social units, even if each one is a communist unit with international ideals, there will be war, unless the population in every unit is stabilized at the optimum level. For consider ; the capitalist world-scramble for profits is only a particular case of a far more general rule, namely that so long as a higher standard of living exists in an alien community other communities will be tempted to improve their own standard by attacking the community with the higher standard.

Wherever we look in history or over the face of the globe we see sturdy simple stocks envying their more sophisticated neighbours, and with their rude strength invading and despoiling them, only to be destroyed themselves when luxury has distracted their energies from mere social survival.

Let us assume that various other existing communities, seeing the tremendous success of communism in Russia, take Russia as their model and overthrow their capitalist governments. Revolution is weakening and exhausting ; while Russia goes on from strength to strength, the nations that follow have to start from the economic depths. Is it likely that communist Russia, prosperous and highly organized to give its citizens all that can be got out of life, will be prepared to lower its economic superiority to assist a chaotic, new-born, poverty-stricken parvenu to the magic circle of communist communities ? A high-standard communist state and a low-standard one will

be rivals just as much as two unequal states in the capitalist world ; and as rivals in the economic field, so potential rivals in the field of war. Of course, there will not be the same unnatural barriers to migration and trade in a fully communist world as handicap us at every turn ; but there is bound to be a period of adjustment during which even communist states may very well find it necessary to close their frontiers, for poor relations can often be more embarrassing than poor neighbours.

But however this may be, the coming of perfect social control and the passing of nationalistic rivalries will show the population problem for what it really is—the adjusting of numbers to the task of best using the natural resources of their surroundings, an adjustment that has been impossible under the system of capitalist *laissez-faire* and free competition.

Consider how our populations grow. We very often forget that marriage and birth are not merely sentimental occasions, but types of human behaviour ruthlessly controlled by inexorable law. To the average human being it seems that a young couple undergo an emotional storm, become engaged, say, “ I think we will get married next year ” and proceed to do so. But behind this apparently free act lies a whole host of economic factors every one of which is exercising a restraining or encouraging influence on the number of couples who get married in any one year. Thus the rate of foreign exchange, the bank rate, the price of wheat in Chicago, of mutton in the Argentine, of gold in South Africa, of Consols in London, of the income tax and so on—all have a decisive though silent voice in the question of whether Miss Clapham shall marry Mr. Tooting or not. And the emotionalism surrounding the nursery and the

layette must not obscure the fact that the number of human bodies provided for human souls depends at all times in human history on crude material economic facts. Because the number of factors are so great, it is impossible to prove that if sixpence is added to the income tax this year there will be so many children not born next year who would have been born if sixpence had been taken off the income tax; but nevertheless it is true.

Consider the population of England: it is many times greater than it would ever have been had there not been coal and iron easily workable beneath the surface of its fields. Coal has begotten our men and women as surely as any more human agency.

It was coal and iron that made possible a change in the face of the earth by the use of the new tools of the Industrial Revolution. It is very interesting to look back at a prophecy that was made in 1696 by Gregory King in his *Observations on the State of England*.

In all probability [he says] the next doubling of the people of England will be in about six hundred years to come, or by the year of our Lord 2300, at which time it will have eleven millions of people. The next doubling after that will be, in all probability, in less than twelve or thirteen hundred years, or by the year of our Lord 3500 or 3600. At which time the Kingdom will have 22 millions of souls . . . in case the world should last so long.

Gregory King was a very intelligent man, and in the eyes of his contemporaries his estimate of population increase was highly exaggerated; and yet it took less than two hundred years for the population of England to reach the figure for which he allowed about a thousand years. Why? Because the evolution of new tools, using the natural resources of coal

## THE STATE BECOMES SUPER-BIOLOGIST

and iron, brought human beings into the world with ever-increasing rapidity.

And what is true of coal and iron in England may be generalized into the statement that whenever new tools or new sources of raw material or power increase the production of useful things, the human population increases automatically. And whenever the production of useful things decreases for any reason, the population called into being by the previous increase is left stranded with a declining standard of living. That is what has happened to most of the world to-day.

If we could diminish the population without delay to correspond with periods of diminishing production, we could go on for ever without economic crises. But we cannot kill men off simply because they are unemployed; and that is why the apologist for capitalism is so interested in giving the unemployed contraceptive advice as the next best thing to killing him off; just as the leaders of capitalist thought in times of expanding prosperity are in favour of huge birth-rates in order to provide cheap labour, large armies, and many purchasers.

That the cause chiefly responsible for diminishing production has always been the capitalist method of distribution and production must not obscure our eyes to the fact that there are causes that would operate even outside a capitalist system to make the limitation of population an advantage to the community. Consider the fate of England once more: her population increased because coal was a vital necessity for all the world; the coalfields beneath her exiguous acres brought the wheat and meat of other continents into her store houses. But coal is no longer so vital a necessity for all the world; there is oil, and water-

power, and other countries have exploited their own supplies of coal more efficiently. The result of this is that the potential maximum population and the optimum population of England and Wales are no longer what they were in the age of coal. The decisive effect on the birth-rate of the changed importance of coal is illustrated by the fact that in 1913 three South Wales mining towns led all other towns with rates of over thirty; to-day these same towns have a rate even lower than the average for the whole country, which is in the neighbourhood of sixteen. The same amount of philoprogenitive instinct doubtless exists still, but economic causes prevent it from operating.

Now it is true that this change can be laid at the door of capitalist methods of production, which are the chief cause of the existence of a lower standard of living than actually need be; but the same law would act under any other economic system. When production goes up, population goes up; when it goes down, since population cannot immediately be eliminated, the standard of living goes down too. And in every case there is an ascertainable limit within which population should be kept in any given area, if life is to be enjoyed most fully there; a limit which is a function of the richness of raw material and power to be had within the area.

The all-powerful state will make it its object to achieve this optimum population. It will be able to do so with a scientific certainty which is impossible in this age of capitalist chaos. For capitalism cannot be reasonable about Population; first, because in its final stages it operates to keep the world artificially poor by depressing the standard of living; second, because it has not got the control over the individual essential for success; third, because it has so many

contradictory objectives obscuring the issue whenever it approaches the problem. Thus in England to-day capitalism is rather inclined to favour smaller population so as to have fewer children to educate, and fewer unemployed to insure ; but in Italy capitalism is all for a high birth-rate, under the mistaken notion that this will produce greater military strength and therefore greater economic and political importance in the eyes of the world.

In Japan a high birth-rate is regarded as an excuse for bullying China ; while in America we see the most interesting example of how moral ideas are relative to economic realities. In the days when an empty continent cried out for exploitation, the practice of contraception was looked upon with a horror greater than that felt even in puritan England ; but now that days of depression and capitalist contraction have set in, it looks as if birth control may be legalized. Moreover, as Bernard Shaw pointed out in his famous single American utterance, America provides the astonishing example of a community of natural puritans and sex-haters, the Mormons, actually taking up polygamy for the political end of making the wilderness fruitful with many offspring. If economic necessity can force a man into polygamy when he would probably prefer a life of infrequent lapses from celibacy, surely the economic determination of most things has been demonstrated.

If we consider what will be possible in a world where none of these three difficulties exist : a world of unlimited abundance, with all-powerful social machinery, and a single purpose—the maintenance of an optimum population ; then we can make certain definite prophecies as to the future size of various communities. And we can begin with England.



## PROPHECY NO. XII

ENGLAND WILL HAVE A POPULATION ONE-TENTH  
OF ITS PRESENT SIZE.

This will not be because the English stock has become "effete", but because the English will be able to settle down to plan the most satisfactory way of enjoying their green and potentially pleasant land. They will not be moved by any of the motives that leap into all conversations on Population to-day. They will not fear that in time of war a small population will mean weakness; for apart from any other consideration, the time has already come when a large population in England is a major military danger. They will not be concerned to have a huge pool of cheap labour so as to keep wages down. They will not want a large number of buyers so as to multiply profit. They will simply want a population of such a size that it can most fully use for its own pleasure the raw material and the natural power available to it.

We shall do well to remember these facts also: first, there is no raw material within the British Isles that is essential to any other country, and therefore there will be no incentive for other countries to trade with the inhabitants of our little islands; when our present position of honest broker is obsolete we cannot hope for an immense foreign trade. On the other hand there are many things that we do not possess and that we must import. Since we have nothing to give in exchange, we cannot hope to import these in any large quantity; and so we shall most of us go and live elsewhere. Moreover, although certain

## THE STATE BECOMES SUPER-BIOLOGIST

pieces of geological good fortune, such as the possession of coal and iron and also the geographical good fortune of being nearer America than the rest of Europe, gave us a favoured position in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, these accidents of time and space will no longer possess the same importance. The presence of sea so near to us that there is no place in England more than sixty-five miles from it, will be as nothing to the absence of mountains. For we are already out of the age when human labour lifting coal out of the depths of the earth can compete with the sun's lifting, without human labour, water vapour to the tops of the hills from which natural law, without human labour, dislodges it, making it furnish power in the process.

And so England will meet the happy fate of becoming once more a garden and a museum: a museum not only of Gothic and medieval exhibits, but of things which will interest future generations far more than these or than Ann Hathaway's cottage; for we shall preserve inviolate the wizened area called the Black Country, so that our great-grandchildren may have some idea of the typical creations of our age of free competition and rugged individualism. So much for England; what of America?

### 31

#### PROPHECY NO. XIII

LARGE TRACTS OF AMERICA WILL GO BACK TO  
THE PRIMEVAL WILDERNESS.

England serves as an excellent example of how a period of great capitalist expansion will be followed by a period when the population must diminish so that life may be most pleasant for all concerned.

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

America is the supreme example of how capitalism, by gutting a continent like a consuming fire, prepares the day when nature will be too sterile to support any but a diminished number of inhabitants.

The United States rises to majestic heights above the great oceans on either side. The huge mid-western plain tilts upwards to the eternal snows of the Rockies and much of it is thousands of feet above sea-level. But if the top thirty feet of American dry land were cut away, the whole continent might as well be at the bottom of the Pacific for all the good it could do the human race. And the top thirty feet is being rapidly and ruthlessly carved away, thanks to the intense greed and stupidity of the human race under rugged individualism. Instead of subduing nature into a docile partner the Americans have killed her and torn the very flesh from her bare bones. Down the Mississippi and a hundred smaller streams you may watch the life blood of a continent going to discolour the sea.

In some parts of the States the havoc is already almost completed. You can drive hundreds of miles through Georgia and other southern states and see how human methods of agriculture have torn away the soil to the sterile rock beneath—and what this means in terms of human culture is known to those who have seen *Tobacco Road*. You can drive through the extraordinary beauty of the wrecked northern peninsula of Michigan and see how the lumbermen came and raped the fair land of all its wealth, leaving behind a vegetation which for all its autumnal splendour will be economically worthless for a hundred years. You can drive through the redwood forests of the State of Washington and marvel at what forest fires and unscientific woodcutting can do in partnership. You

can stand in amazement and watch day become night as the once fertile soil of Kansas and Nebraska hurtles through the air between you and the sun, finally to fall feet deep in choking dust. You can see millions of acres of denuded territory where the rain no longer falls because the trees are gone. You can pass through Oklahoma and Texas and a dozen other states and see the new forests of oil derricks, and think how the vast pool of oil beneath the soil is being pumped away with little thought for its future conservation, so long as it can be turned to present profit.

And over and beyond all this there is the appalling fact that every year inches of the famous black earth of the Middle West, the richest soil humanity has ever worked, goes down to perdition in the sea ; so that it is only a matter of a few years before that fertile plain will resemble the stony uplands of Vermont and the other New England states, with their abandoned farms, their forgotten fields, their deserted villages.

Against this general spoliation of a continent we must put the fact that, owing to the uneconomic methods forced upon agriculture by capitalist methods of distributing goods, vast tracts are cultivated unnecessarily. A few thousand men scientifically using the soil of one state, Kansas, could provide bread for all America. If Kansas were worked like a factory, and its produce distributed according to the needs of Americans instead of for the profits of a few people, mostly middlemen and financial speculators, the rest of the Middle West could lie fallow recuperating, conserving its strength and stopping the fatal hæmorrhage of the soil into the rivers ; the law of diminishing returns would put large tracts out of cultivation entirely and America become a series of vast national parks dotted

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

with highly concentrated areas of agricultural production.

We can say that the natural richness of America a hundred years hence depends upon the rapidity with which the present wasteful method of exploiting nature comes to an end ; and by A.D. 2000 men will marvel that during the period when there was most waste of soil, of trees, of oil, there was also the greatest want among mortals ; that while everybody was consuming natural wealth with the rapacity of a forest fire, farmers were forced to pray for bad weather so that they would not have to sell their crops at a loss.

In picturing an optimum population for the future America we should not forget how the evolution of human tools has eliminated distance. It is a very short time since the idea of Oregon entering the Union was regarded as absurd if only because it would take all the year for a Congressman to get from the Pacific to Washington. Now he can do it in a little over a day. Distance no longer means isolation and lack of unity. There is no need of human links to keep the continent politically together.

On the other hand there can be no doubt that man does not function well over great areas. He is a much better social being if his emotions, his loyalties, his organizing ability, are concentrated upon smaller spheres. The American, like the Roman, functions better as a citizen of no mean city, than as the member of a nation sprawling across a continent. The prospect of many city states surrounded by a sea of natural beauty, yet, thanks to human inventions, not isolated in terrifying distances, is full of great promise. The objections to separate units on the continent that obsessed the mind of earlier statesmen will disappear once war, economic and military, ceases to be a pos-

## THE STATE BECOMES SUPER-BIOLOGIST

sibility between them, and, instead of a chaotic mass of humanity bestriding a ruined continent, we shall see a series of centres of intense activity surrounded by hundreds of miles of forest and wilderness.

We have glanced at the future of English and American population simply as examples of what will happen in an age when complete social control strives with perfected scientific technique at an optimum population. Let us glance in conclusion at the nature of that technique.

To our grandchildren looking back at this Age of Stupidity nothing is likely to seem more disgraceful than the attitude of public opinion to the production of that most important of earth's products, the human being. Every device of emotional hypocrisy is used to obscure the facts ; the good of society and the happiness of individuals alike are sacrificed to a mass of muddle-headed superstition.

On the one hand there are advertised under the flimsiest disguises every sort of means of procuring abortion with the sole restriction that all alike shall be ineffectual. On the other hand it is a crime to advertise certain preventives of venereal infection. Again, public opinion pretends to believe that any married couple is capable of bringing up children and making a success of their lives. God, nature and society are supposed to combine to welcome the offspring of two imbeciles joined in holy matrimony and the illegitimate offspring of abundant vitality is accursed. But there is no need to waste time recounting platitudes ; we need only consider how they will be swept away.

To-day the state tries to prevent abortion, but hundreds of thousands of abortions are brought about every year at risk of life and health. Probably there are as

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

many criminal abortions practised in a year in London or New York as there are live births, and the number of women who are ruined for life at the hands of quacks is too horrible to think of.

Not fifty years hence most of the abortions that take place now will be unnecessary since the state will see to it that universal contraceptive knowledge is provided. Moreover, it is highly doubtful whether the present mechanical and chemical means of contraception will be used. It is much more likely that every woman will harmlessly and normally dislocate certain life cycles by a regular use of the appropriate substances, unless she desires freely and with the consent of the duly constituted biological authority to have a child. There are those who will not like the idea that the "glorious uncertainty" of begetting will be made obsolete, just as there are those who think that it adds to the charm of cricket that a match may be ruined by a thunderstorm; but it is certain that the plaint of the Shropshire Lad,

The night my parents got me  
Their thoughts were not on me,

will no longer be heard in the land. Human life is too "sacred" to permit such flippancy, except in an age like our own when nothing except profits and worn-out superstitions are really sacred.

It is curious that human nature seems to entertain a certain reverence for chance. This is a survival from a very primitive worship; but we may as well accept the assurance that our great-grandchildren will not be born as a result of blind thoughtlessness; they will be the offspring not of luck, but of cunning; the other way has proved too costly in individual and social misery.

And what sort of individuals will they be that compose these optimum populations scattered over the face of the globe? Let us look at the burning problem of race.

In 1936 the destinies of several of the most advanced human groups are being thought out in terms of racial differences. Colour of skin, the habit of circumcision, shape of head, of nose, of eyelid—these are the accidents of time and space that man has chosen to regard as crucial.

It is of no importance that you and I both forget the material world and all its contradictions in the common enjoyment of art, music, literature; if your head is round and mine long; if your nose is hooked and mine straight; if your skin is heavily pigmented and mine prone to burn in the midday sun—then you and I may not enjoy one another. Indeed we must prostitute science in an effort to prove that the other is inferior and to kill one another more and more effectively.

Racial philosophy with its race pride and race prejudice rots up the human personality to-day far more effectively than all the drugs, drink and obscenity in the world. The theory that if you have blue eyes and fair wavy hair and a certain-shaped head, then whether you are a waster or not, you must be superior to the greatest philosopher in the world, if that philosopher's ancestors practised circumcision, is destructive of all values. The theory that if your skin is white and another man's is dark, then you need not be too careful about the evidence upon which you hang him, and need not listen to his evidence at all; such a theory does not merely lead to a few lynchings



## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

and sufferings prettily sublimated into spirituals ; it rots the moral sense, the belief in law and justice of a whole people. The complacent assumption on the part of British imperialists that the white man's burden was given them by God, is bound to lead in due time to an ignominious white man's grave.

There are many people who seem to feel that a problem like race prejudice is more intractable than the economic problems that in the long run find their own solution. Economic problems, they feel, are a matter of doing sums wrong and learning to do them right ; if men go on doing them wrong, or faking the answers, they will be found out and others will take their place ; but what are you to do with the man who believes in the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, or in keeping the nigger in his place ? You cannot do away with human nature, and race consciousness is the instinctive heritage of every normal man. Nature endowed us with a pride in our own type and an antipathy for any other to help us in the struggle for existence—so runs the argument.

In the face of this let me make a blunt prophecy :

BY A.D. 4000 THE RACE PROBLEMS WILL ALL BE SOLVED. THERE WILL BE ONE RACE IN THE WORLD, WITH A PALE COFFEE-COLOURED SKIN, MONGOLOID EYES, RATHER SHORTER THAN THE AVERAGE ENGLISHMAN OF TO-DAY.

That will be history's answer to *Mein Kampf*, however often Hitler may persuade his people to vote unanimously for a political creed which includes several biological falsities raised to the dignity of religious dogmas.

The reasons why this is a perfectly safe prophecy are two. First, because the evolution of human tools,

especially in the way of transport and world-inter-communication, will force upon us greater and greater mixture of races geographically, and all history shows that geographical mixing of races is simply the prelude to physical intermixture.

Second, because the forces which tend to slow down the natural development of racial intermixture are precisely those forces which are in process of becoming obsolete to-day. Let us examine each of these two reasons in turn.

The most unpopular race theory in the world to-day is the scandal that Hitler is really a Jew ; it unites Nazi and Jew as blood brothers in a sense of horror and disgrace. We will assume however that Hitler is what he thinks he is, a Nordic and an Aryan. What does this mean ?

To say that Hitler is an Aryan means that he belongs to a widely varied group of people all of whom speak some tongue of the Aryan linguistic group. And there can be no disputing this ; Hitler spends a very considerable part of his time shouting one of the Aryan languages ; so does Mr. Gandhi, except that he does not shout ; and Mr. Paul Robeson sings an Aryan tongue, the only one he has ever known.

Then is the theory of Aryan supremacy, which is the corner-stone of the modern German ideal of life, that Hitler, Gandhi and Robeson, three masters of the Aryan language, along with the fiendish child murderer of Dortmund, the religious maniac who stares at his navel, but would undoubtedly speak Aryan if he approved of speaking at all, and the negro in Harlem who has recently persuaded his followers that he is God—is it the theory of Aryan supremacy that these six gentlemen and all the others who speak Aryan are better than those who do not ? Of course

it is not. There is no place in Hitler's Aryanism for Paul Robeson or Gandhi or their less reputable fellows ; there is only a place for Hitler and the child-murderer of Dortmund. Aryan in Germany has no longer anything to do with language ; it means a man neither of whose grandmothers contained Jewish blood. It is a negative racial term and may be defined as any blood except Jewish blood, though when taxed with the blunt question the Nazi would probably include as kinds of Jews, and therefore non-Aryan, the Negro and the Hindu. Since there are very few Negroes and Hindus in Germany the matter has not arisen.

We can see now why Aryan is such a good word for the Nazi philosophers, and so much better than Nordic, once so popular. Nordic, being lawfully a word implying a race type, has its own definition, and Hitler does not come within that definition. It would be absurd to have Hitler lead a movement for Nordic supremacy, since the definition of a Nordic is :

an individual with a long head ; fair wavy hair ; blue eyes ; fair complexion ; tall stature.

Now Aryan, having no meaning at all as a racial term, does away with the difficulty that most Nazis are not Nordic, but retains all the charm of the "Nordic Myth" ; it suggests that the big blond beast must by right divine bestride the world like a great Colossus, and it says as little as is necessary about the blond beast's physical appearance.

In terms of scientific thinking, and therefore in terms of inexorable law, the racial theories of the Nazis are farcical. How then are they able to cause the whole world to pause in fear ? Because they are merely a grotesque mask covering a grim reality. Like all other examples of race prejudice, Nazi race

philosophy is an economic problem emotionalized for purposes of propaganda. Anti-semitism can only be understood if it is treated as an economic problem, and it will only cease to exist as a problem when Jews cease to be an economic problem.

But I do not like Jews, you may say ; it is a matter of personal taste and has nothing to do with economics. Why should my objection to my daughter marrying a Negro be called an economic problem ?

When people insist upon such facts as these, that they do not like Jews and that they would not like their daughter to marry a Negro, one can only answer them with a colloquialism, " You don't have to tell me," and add another and a shorter one—" So what ? "

We may take it for granted that we have all of us an animal dislike of types that do not physically correspond to our own. It is even possible that Jews are not by nature always attracted to the daughters of the uncircumcised, though a very natural snobbism helps them to overcome natural disinclination, just as Prohibition helped young people to drink for social glory far more than they could naturally enjoy. It is not at all unlikely that well-educated Negroes have no burning desire to possess our daughters as daughters-in-law. All this is very natural. But does any human being not sunk in the depths of pathetic intellectual inadequacy suppose that these natural inclinations account for the appalling ascendancy of race prejudice in international affairs to-day ? No ; sexual and physical aversions do not mould the policy of nations ; they are brought in to strengthen and sometimes to obscure the true causes lying underneath.

Nor is the wave of anti-semitism a matter of religious prejudice. All this talk of ritual sacrifice and Christian children butchered to make a Hebrew holi-

day ; this legend of Judas and the undying punishment of a race which slew the Man-God our civilization pretends to follow—this is not the stuff to explain the success of servile totalitarianism in Germany ; it is simply useful to bring a few more fools to heel, and to bolster up the self-esteem of reigning bullies. Religious mania has not raised race prejudice to be the arbiter of national destinies. To understand the problem of race we have to examine the economic history of the Jews ; a history that has singled them out to be destroyers of the economic *status quo* on more than one occasion in human history.

Consider, for example, the period when feudalism was giving way before the primitive capitalism of the medieval town. The Jew, without country and without land, gathered in every incipient commercial centre. There was no place for him on the land for he was landless ; and because he was landless he was without honour : he could not desecrate the military profession, and of course he could not find a place for surplus sons in church. He could only concern himself with disreputable things ; he could soil his hands with work ; he could superintend the growing disgrace called trade ; he could think of money. “ Jews only think of money.” Of course they do, since they have been forbidden to think of anything else. At the very moment that the old power of Land was giving way before the new power of Money, Jews were only allowed to think of Money ; and so they led the economic revolution that destroyed feudalism ; they were literally forced into the possession of the new tools which brought the new civilization called capitalism ; naturally they were unpopular when the ruined feudalists saw what they had done ; naturally the ruined feudalists found a dozen reasons for put-

ting Jews in their proper place ; naturally they saw in the Jewish activities an international force aiming at the heart of Christian civilization.

And just as in the days of Constantine Christian civilization saved itself from Cæsar by taking over Cæsar lock, stock and barrel, so, with the rise of capitalism, the feudal form of Christianity, which is Catholicism, was transformed into the capitalist form which is Protestantism, and this hastily sanctified what had hitherto been a disreputable Jewish monopoly, the letting out of money at stud. Under feudalism filthy lucre was left to the dirty Jew ; under capitalism it was disinfected and became the concern of the honest Quaker. The Jew had to begin all over again.

Once more we are at the parting of the ways. The capitalism of our fathers is already dead, although we may not yet all of us be certain what is ultimately to take its place. A ruthless competition, a dog-eat-dog chaos, has caught us all ; and once more the Jew is best equipped to scramble through to the other side ; and this being so the Jew is hated with all the righteous indignation that can only be felt by an unsuccessful pickpocket for a successful one.

Why is the Jew well equipped for the last and most ruthless stage of capitalism ? Because capitalism demands that he who would be leader must sacrifice his life to a grim concentration upon business. The captain of industry may buy pictures in his disillusioned old age, but he must not paint them in youth ; he may warm the dying embers by keeping a well-paid mistress, but as a young man he must eschew the sexual instinct as a waste of time and energy. He may of course marry a helpmate, and quite a number of successful business men celebrate their golden weddings ; but no Don Juan, no Werther, no Aucassin

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

ever made a million. No mere religious asceticism ever demanded such self-abnegation, such castration of every interest save one, as that which the aspirant to capitalist honours must accept.

And the Jew, owing to his peculiar social-economic position, has more of the necessary asceticism than any other group within our modern communities. The very force of social prejudice has saved him from many of the distractions that weaken the concentration of other people ; the fact that the scales are weighted against him increases the grimness with which he attacks his problem of survival. He is willing to coin a larger proportion of his sweat and tears into cash and credit than his rivals. He will accept a lower standard of living in his youth, so that he may rule in his maturity ; he will cramp his life unto the third and fourth generation that his children may eventually live more abundantly.

And so it comes about that in an age when the opportunities afforded by capitalism diminish daily, there are more Jews who have made the necessary sacrifices so as to reap the advantages. By a living sacrifice the Jewish parent has swung his child up from the clothing-trade sweat shop into the learned professions. By long training of thinking in terms of sums a thousand times smaller than the smallest coin, he has perfected these tools, typical of our stage of capitalism, the chain store and the department store, and in so doing he has ruined millions of small men, both Jew and gentile. Is it surprising that anti-semitism has once more become a world power ? The Jew, by self-sacrifice and intelligence, has collared the tools whose use brings power.

Those who are weighing the contrasted strengths of communism and the new capitalism of the totali-

## THE STATE BECOMES SUPER-BIOLOGIST

tarian state will do well to consider this matter of anti-semitism. Hitler attacks chain stores because they are Jewish ; in so doing he is repeating history. He is angry because the Jew has control of a new and more powerful set of economic tools. In exactly the same way, the medieval feudalist was angry when he found that the Jew was in control of the new and more powerful economic tool called money and usury, which was replacing Land power. But can Hitler, or anyone else, reverse the irreversible process of evolution ? No ; a world that has once lit itself with electricity will not go back to the rushlight ; chain stores and department stores can never be eliminated so that the small man can breathe again. Intelligent capitalists knowing this are willing to use the battle-cries of anti-semitism to squeeze out the Jew, so that they may have no competitors ; but the small man having served their turn will remain the forgotten man of well-meaning sentimentalists.

And once more the Jew will have to start again, as he did when the Quaker took over his medieval disreputable tasks. He is starting again. The anti-semites are perfectly right when they say that the Jew is turning to Moscow. Once more the Jew is placed in the position of being the economic pioneer ; smoked out of his positions in the nests of successful capitalism, he has nothing to hope for save in communism alone.

Outside Russia, France and Spain and one or two minor countries, communism at present is predominantly *petit bourgeois* ; it is psychologically rather than economically determined ; in London and New York the majority of communists are Jews. The gentile bourgeoisie of the world have only themselves to blame for this. In the cut-throat civil war which they wage



## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

for profit, they thought to gain an advantage by stirring up race prejudice ; and by so doing they have united the genius of a great people on the side of revolution. When Hitler sounds the call to holy war against Russia, what decent Jew will come from any of the world's four corners ?

But we must not think of race prejudice as being chiefly a matter of anti-semitism ; far beyond the problem of the Jews is the problem of black and white races. I have confronted the man who does not want his daughter to marry a Negro with a prophecy that by A.D. 4000 there will have been complete racial intermixture ; and I must hasten to coat the pill with a reminder that he will not only not be there to see and suffer, but that long before then our present habits of inheritance will have become obsolete, so that he need not fear that his money will get into disreputable hands.

Once more let us say that it is a natural part of our animal nature to dislike sexual intermixture with very different types. Of course, the enormous numbers of half-breeds proves incontrovertibly that many white men and some white women have been able to overcome their natural distaste ; but we may let that pass. Nobody is going to advocate forced miscegenation, not even the communists. (Although when I was travelling in Texas some years ago, a passionate propagandist was getting his audiences to take him seriously when he said, " If Bolshevism came to America it would mean that your wife would have to dance with a buck nigger.")

But the fact that we do not like racial intermixture is not the essential factor in the race problem between black and white, as we shall see if we consider the interrelationships between the two in three different

places where they meet. Consider the race relations in the Southern States of the U.S.A., in the British African Empire, and in the French African Empire.

Everyone knows that the trouble in, shall we say, Georgia, is not simply a white-black clash ; it is specifically a clash between black farm labourers and peasants, and the " poor white trash ". It is true that as the poor white trash have votes and as the better whites have prejudices, we find judges and politicians behaving as badly towards the Negro as the dwellers on *Tobacco Road* ; but the crux of the matter lies in the existence of a submerged white semi-serf population in competition with another race, which history has deprived of weapons of defence and offence. If the soil of Georgia had not run away down the rivers long ago leaving humanity derelict behind, lynching would remain the act of a few perverts instead of becoming a social habit, justified in high places. " You must remember that I come from a part of the country where it is not safe for a white woman to go beyond her garden gate alone," said a not very attractive leader of opinion to me in New York ; a remark which may be regarded as the fine flower of a civilization where a whole race may be used as a scapegoat for the economic misery of another. But this absurd sex-phobia is only a picturesque garnishing for the fundamental economic clash.

If we turn to British Africa, we find the white-black problem assuming a different shape. There are very few lynchings and on the whole far less ill-feeling. In spite of the fact that the whites are a small minority, and that often white women are left alone on farms with nothing but rather primitive savages for miles around, there is less fear of rape and less sex hysteria of any sort.

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

Now white British in Africa and white Americans in the southern States are indistinguishable *racially*, and so are the blacks of both continents; the pronounced differences in racial interrelations are due to the totally different economic conditions ruling those interrelations. In Africa there is no "poor white trash" to speak of; as yet the two races are not economic competitors. There are no worthless whites competing in the labour market with ex-serfs; instead the white race, by expropriating the black man's land has turned him into a wage slave and has towards him therefore the typical reactions of a proprietor or a capitalist towards the lower orders. Where there is a clash it is the sort of clash that uncivilized industrialism produces anywhere. But if we turn to French Africa we find a very different picture. The "Anglo-Saxon" seeing that the Frenchman does not seem to regard the Negro as a mixture of pathetic higher chimpanzee and sex pervert, is inclined to believe that his own antipathies are a race characteristic of northern peoples, and that the distasteful tolerance of the French is due to the "Mediterranean" stocks being nearer the African in origin. Actually we have only to consider the different economic concept underlying French imperialism to see why this difference of feeling exists.

French imperialism does not make the white man the economic competitor of the black. Frenchmen do not want to live in Africa; they do not want to take the black man's land; they do not want to introduce European industrial rivalries into Africa; they want to use their African possessions as a vast reservoir from which they can draw man-power to fight their battles in Europe. White and black competing in the labour market are bitter rivals; white and black buried in steel and concrete trenches and

## THE STATE BECOMES SUPER-BIOLOGIST

maintaining the watch on the Rhine are comrades. The reason why the French get on better with Africans is not because we are somehow superior to them and therefore more " choosy ", but because their economic relations are different.

In short, all the evidence that common sense can muster goes to prove that race prejudice, starting as a natural manifestation of the fact that birds of a feather flock together and keep alien plumages at a distance, has been inflamed to a fever in our day by the viciousness of economic competition. The fever will continue so long as economic competition of the present type continues. It will grow worse in some communities and some communities will die of it.

Inexorable natural law brings it about, therefore, that absence of race prejudice has a distinct survival value for the lucky community which possesses this negative quality ; and in the modern world the only community that possesses it is Russia. There must be many Russians who do not like Jews, and who do not wish their daughters to marry Negroes, but thanks to the absence of the sort of economic rivalry that causes it the fever of race prejudice does not infest the body politic. While Hitler preaches successfully his doctrine of race purity and shames all human decency by the methods of his blood cleansing, Russia eliminates race distinctions and removes the artificial restrictions on the melting-pot process which all history shows to be the natural solution of racial problems.

We reach therefore the conclusion that the past, present and future of race problems depend upon the economic evolution imposed upon humanity by inexorable law. The very existence of race prejudice is founded upon primitive economic rivalry ; for one

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

hunting tribe must needs defend its hunting grounds from all others. It ebbs and flows in the human heart according as economic competition becomes more or less bitter. It is destroyed by intercourse unless kept alive by such competition and every community that has attempted racial exclusiveness has in the end been destroyed.

If the man who does not wish his daughter to marry a Negro is still unconvinced of the reasonableness of my prophecy (I do not say that he need be reconciled, that is quite another matter) let him consider a few more quite indisputable facts.

Consider, for example, the exclusive Englishman, the true-born Englishman, what manner of man is he racially? The immortal author of *Robinson Crusoe* told us long ago :

For Englishmen to boast of generation  
Cancels their knowledge, and lampoons the nation.  
A true-born Englishman's a contradiction,  
In speech an irony, in fact a fiction.

These are the heroes that despise the Dutch  
And rail at new come foreigners so much ;  
Forgetting that themselves are all derived  
From the most scoundrel race that ever lived ;  
A horrid crowd of rambling thieves and drones,  
Who ransacked kingdoms and dispeopled towns ;  
The Pict and painted Briton, treacherous Scot,  
By hunger, theft and rapine hither brought ;  
Norwegian pirates, buccaneering Danes,  
Whose red-haired offspring everywhere remains ;  
Who joined with Norman French compound the breed  
From whence your true-born Englishmen proceed.

And lest, by length of time, it be pretended,  
The climate may this modern breed have mended,  
Wise Providence, to keep us where we are,  
Mixes us daily with exceeding care ;  
We have been Europe's sink, the jakes where she  
Voids all her offal outcast progeny ;

## THE STATE BECOMES SUPER-BIOLOGIST

From our fifth Henry's time the strolling bands  
Of banished fugitives from neighbouring lands  
Have here a certain sanctuary found :  
The eternal refuge of the vagabond,  
Wherein but half a common age of time,  
Borrowing new blood and manners from the clime,  
Proudly they learn all mankind to condemn,  
And all their race are true-born Englishmen.

If this picture was true, as indeed it was, of seventeenth-century England, it is equally true of America to-day ; only a contemporary American Defoe would have the eager hands of a hundred patriotic ladies pulling his ears if he were to say so ; and it is true also of modern Germany ; although a unanimous vote would deny it and hurry the poet into a concentration camp. We are all mongrels the whole world over. Indeed the process of miscegenation began long before there were Picts and Scots, long before 1066 and all that ; for our best physical anthropologists assure us that the Nordic race, when you can isolate it at all, proves to be a blending of three earlier races, one of which is a *bleached negroid stock*. It is interesting that those full Anglo-Saxon lips, so dear to Herrick and Keats and Hollywood and all of us, are the delicious legacy of our duskier ancestresses.

It is true that pure races are to be found in one or two places even to-day. Hidden by tropical forests and swamps, or by inaccessible islands, a few human stocks, most of them pygmies, have maintained their race purity and allowed history to forget them ; but a few crude boats and a navigable river, to say nothing of roads, railways, ocean liners and aeroplanes, are enough to upset the ideals of splendid isolation. The evolution of human tools has turned the world into one great cocktail-shaker.

It is true that capitalism at its last gasp has exploited

race prejudice to the full ; a "Nordic" young lady who could not get a part on Broadway told me that "the Jews had so deluged the stage with obscenity that there were no parts a decent girl could accept" ; and she believed it. It would have been useless to say, "My dear, there were burlesques out west long before the American Jew was invented" ; this young Christian was convinced that she was being denied her spotlight triumph by the inherent dirtiness of the race of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

In the same way a charming Californian was concerned with the Japanese menace : "We are being ruined by the competition of an inferior race" and he gave me a pathetic example of the Japanese inferiority. A man sold half a ranch to a friend, a good Nordic friend ; soon there came a Japanese asking to buy the other half. "If you sell him the land," said the Nordic, "I shall be ruined." "But I need the money, what shall I do ?" "Well, if you must sell, make him pay twice as much as you made me pay, and that will ruin him." After much argument the Japanese paid for his inferiority by paying double, and the family moved in. Over the dividing line the Nordic saw odd things happening ; piles of soil shifted here and there by man, woman and child according to some odd oriental whimsy. When planting time had come, it was possible to see the method in the madness : a flat field had been turned into a succession of little valleys and mountain ranges, thereby doubling the surface that could be planted. It is inferiority of this sort that stirs up the primitive pride of race against the yellow peril.

These two instances may be taken as typical of the true nature of the race problem. We live in an age when every man is at the throat of his neighbour ;

it is splendid to be able to suspend the rules of the game and to deny even the honour that is normally practised among thieves to whole groups of our economic competitors ; and for this purpose we see all over the world to-day an appeal to animal feelings which were valuable in the sub-man's murky beginnings. " If communism came to America, your wife would be forced to dance with a buck nigger." Human nature being what it is, such a statement is worth half a dozen supreme court decisions. " The Jews have your jobs " scrawled on a hundred London suburban walls, and what is the use even of Canon Sheppard talking over the radio. Yes, the reactionary is perfectly right ; one of the inevitable results of the new order that is approaching will be a hastening of the solution of the race problem by the coming of One Big Race. It does not appeal to us perhaps, but the same may be said of death. And, as with death, we had better reconcile ourselves to the inevitable. For what is the alternative ? To be remembered for a time in history as individuals or communities which put their puny weight against the wheels of the universe.

By A.D. 4000 the race problem will be solved, and if you do not like the solution you can console yourself by remembering that you will not be there to see. You are a true-born Englishman or a hundred-per-cent American, and if you want to know what that means in terms of past history you have the very English Defoe to tell you. With such a past, what matter if our remote progeny will have received from nature what our daughters have to get from art ?—a bronzed skin, a larger mouth, and Mongolian eyes ?



## CHAPTER VII

### EVERYDAY LIFE IN 1960

#### 33

WHAT will these changes mean in terms of everyday life, let us say one generation hence? After all the solving of political and economic problems, though they dominate every breath we take, every flicker of the eyelid, every smile and sigh, are not so vivid to us as the common incidents of our everyday lives. What will an average day contain for our children's children?

The historian of the future has only one danger to face in describing everyday life in 1960: he is likely to be too conservative in his estimate of change. That dangerous speculator, Mr. H. G. Wells, prophesied about 1907 that a day might come when man would use an aeroplane in war; but he was half-afraid that it was going rather far to suggest it.

Lest some of the prophecies we are about to make, may seem dangerously speculative, let us consider for a moment what our life to-day would be like without the following material elements:

Automobiles.

Electric light.

Contraceptives.

Wireless, X-rays, ultra-violet rays.

Artificial silk.

Telephones.

## EVERYDAY LIFE IN 1960

Aluminium.

Grape-fruit.

Cinema and Talkies.

Jazz.

Photogravure, cheap rapid typesetting and printing.

Refrigeration.

Vitamins, ductless glands.

Photography.

Consider your everyday pleasures and habits and how much they are dependent upon the various items in this list, and then consider how recently they have become available for human use. Thirty-six years have passed since the beginning of the century and it is not too much to say that when the bells and guns welcomed 1901 into existence none of the items on this list coloured the existence of the average man. Let us look at one or two of them. First, the automobile: true, the British government had, four years before the end of the century, repealed the law which said that a man with a red flag must walk before and behind any horseless carriage to warn the passers, but even in 1905 there were less than eighty thousand motor-cars registered in the United States, while the word Ford was used to imply a vehicle for the first time in English literature in 1914.

In the same year people first heard of "birth control" although of course the pioneers of contraception were prosecuted for obscenity thirty years before. Indeed it was not until after the Great War that birth control, by taking away one of the traditional sanctions for good behaviour, altered the mores of civilized man.

Apart from the motor-car the chief elements in modern amusement are certainly the Cinema and the

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

Wireless ; and we must hasten to add the chief elements in modern education also. It is therefore amazing to realize that the first nickelodeon was opened in Pittsburgh just thirty years ago, that the first movie story was shown only twenty-eight years ago, that twenty-five years ago a London newspaper heralded the coming of a new word thus : " Cinematograph, which has just been cut down in a glaring advertisement to ' cinema ' ", and finally that Talkies have yet to experience their tenth birthday. As to Wireless, the word Broadcast was first used fifteen years ago and the B.B.C. opened its doors in November, 1922. As I write the mother of Television is still " expecting ".

It is less than eighteen years since I heard the first Jazz Band in London and a London paper of the time defined Jazz itself as " a kind of ragtime dance, three steps to four musical beats " ; and three years later the austere *Contemporary Review* allowed a contributor to say : " The frank barbarism began its appeal with nigger minstrels and has landed us in ' jazz ' ". (In passing it is instructive to note that long long ago, in 1865, a happy blind conservative rejoiced that " hitherto we have had neither Zouaves, nor drummers, nor Turkish saxophonists introduced into the orchestra ". —Damme, sir, how would you like your daughter to dance to a saxophone ?)

If you regard health as more important than frivolity, remember that there was no worry about vitamins before 1912, though the long shadow of adrenalin had cast itself before the current rage for endocrinology as early as 1901. Before this century the ductless glands had had to blush unseen and unsung.

Children who have not learned how to read fluently can remember the days before the ice-man had given

## EVERYDAY LIFE IN 1960

way to the frigidaire in America, and the days when in England the nearest approach to ice in the ordinary man's larder was a window facing the northern blasts.

And so on all through the list. Everything that concerns our everyday life is a parvenu ; and behind the obvious amenities and menaces we have listed lie the thousands of technical discoveries that have transformed the factory and the workshop, the new forms of power, the new raw materials, the new metals and chemicals. In the last thirty-five years life has changed more completely than in any previous three hundred. Is it extravagant to expect a greater change still in the next quarter of a century ?

### 34

And so we make our first prophecy about life in 1960 :

BY 1960 WORK WILL BE LIMITED TO THREE  
HOURS A DAY.

This Age of Stupidity which is all that fate will give to our generation to enjoy consists largely in untangling the future from the fixed ideas of the past. By inventing new tools man has made his traditions worthless, but he has not yet found this out ; in many cases he is hanging on quite unnecessarily to painful preconceptions although he has acquired the tools to free him from them.

An excellent example of this is the history of the opposition to the use of anæsthetics in childbirth. Nobody but a male hopelessly besotted with sentimentality can see in childbirth aught but a degrading and depressing error of biology. It comes as a shock of shame to the reasonable man to find that there

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

are still educated and sane people who believe that the pains of a woman bearing a child are the punishment of a just God upon the daughters of Eve and that these morose philosophers deprecate the easing of the punishment by the giving of anæsthetics.

Many doctors—for doctors are often the most superstitious and the least scientific of men—have gone so far as to bring pseudo-medical arguments to show that the humane allaying of these pains is bad for mother and child alike. We may take this as an example of how mankind, having the wit to discover new tools, delays using them through the inertia of past habits of thought.

But the madness which thinks it is good for women to suffer the pangs of childbirth unaided by new scientific tools is as nothing compared with the madness of our generation before the more universal pangs of daily industrial labour. Our tradition does not permit us to look upon work as an unpleasant necessity to be reduced in quantity as much as possible; we regard it as a virtue and pretend successfully to like it. And this holds us back from taking full advantage of the new labour-saving devices of scientific civilization.

Theoretically it would be perfectly simple to plan a community where work was reduced to the exact amount needed to give every human being all the material goods which he can use to enrich his life; but instead of this we have invented a community intent upon making men slaves to dull labour, and although we have succeeded in increasing work far beyond necessary limits we do not give anyone the bare necessities of life. We do not give even the rich the best that could be produced; for our methods of distribution leave rich and poor alike a prey to

shoddy quackery, poison tricked out as food, coloured water for medicine, sham structures for homes. We multiply unprofitable labour and diminish the results beyond all reason. Why?

35

If we analyse the cost of various articles used in our daily lives, we will find that in almost every instance the article costs far less to make than it costs to sell it to us. Consider a piece of soap costing sixpence; it is most improbable that it cost more than one penny to make; why does it cost us sixpence?

We do not need to be told that we want soap; washing has become as natural as eating, and soap manufacturers cannot pose as great educators in the arts of hygiene. And yet a very large proportion of the extra fivepence is spent in persuading us to buy what we already know we want.

Compare the methods by which modern communities provide their members with soap and those by which they provide them with water. If we bought water as we buy soap, we should be forced to choose between a dozen different kinds of water—Jones's water, Smith's water, Robinson's water. The fact that they were all  $H_2O$  would be carefully hidden from us; Jones would pay eminent actresses, boxers and expatriated aristocrats to say that they can distinguish Jones's water from the others blindfolded. Smith would demand that we bought his water because "It's filtered", hinting that the other waters were not, although in fact they were treated by precisely the same process as Smith's. Robinson in desperation would hire men to start a whispering campaign that cholera bacilli had been found in his competitors'

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

products ; which would bring from them an indignant demand for "truth in advertising". A fabulous sum of money would be spent to show pictures of naked beauties in or near pools of Robinson's water ; a lady, heroine of a long-forgotten controversy, would appear once more in all her shivering appeal and the slogan "It's always SEPTEMBER MORN with users of Jones's water" ; while Moses would strike a rock in the wilderness and be rewarded by a stream of Smith's water all in neon lights. A persistent campaign would be carried on with the help of eminent doctors to make us take too many baths, another with the help of eminent horticulturists to make us overwater our flowers, a third with the help of professors of literature to persuade us to read a six-inch shelf of the world's classics printed on rubber during our morning dip. And finally laws would be passed for the forcible pollution of every mountain stream and lake where we might enjoy water as nature's free gift. A grotesque picture ? A perfectly accurate picture of how we organize to buy and sell almost every other commodity except water.

If our picture of a possible way of selling water is fantastic, why is it not fantastic that we sell soap, cigarettes, motor-cars, even works of literature and art in this way ?

Now consider that the sum of sixpence that we paid for this bit of soap is a symbol for a certain amount of the life of several human beings surrendered by them to boredom and fatigue—for the man who positively enjoys "selling" soap or anything else is evidently a pathological product of our economic system.

Translating the soap into terms of human life and feeling, we find that, in order to sell us what we know

we want, human beings give up a large proportion of the brief experience which lies between the two infinities of their non-existence. Even if one believes in survival after death and that this life is nothing but a preparation, no one can pretend that the life of a salesman is a very good preparation for eternity. Yet rational humanity is at present content with such a way of living.

Now the inexorable laws of nature rule that if there are two rivals, two stocks of animals, two breeds of plants, two human communities competing with one another for survival in the struggle for existence, that one will survive which uses less energy than the other to do the job of living. Suppose, then, that a community installed deposits labelled " soap " at the street corners and that its members had merely to put in a penny, turn a handle and get their soap ; and suppose that the energy symbolized by fivepence and at present grossly wasted, were used for productive purposes in other directions, how could any community organized like our own hope to survive in competition with such higher sanity ?

Apologists for our traditional ways of doing things will say that the tremendous educative force of advertising is the only thing that keeps mankind clean ; that if you stopped terrifying people with the dread of B.O., if you did not stimulate their conditioned reflexes with sexual suggestions, if you did not hold out fictitious claims of increased charm, virility, health, the consumption of soap and therefore the standard of cleanliness would drop to medieval levels. Very well, let us spend one-tenth of the cost of advertising rival soaps as different when they are really the same on endowing good instruction in all our schools ; instead of spending one shilling and sixpence on a



## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

pennyworth of peppermint and boiled-down animal fats, let us have mouth-drills for the younger generation ; let us even tell the younger generation that all the prophylactic and disinfective virtues claimed for the contents of those tubes are grossly exaggerated and dangerously deceptive, and we shall not only improve the public health and train people to think about hygiene instead of being vilely deceived, but we shall save enough human energy to enable us to survive instead of going under in the struggle for existence.

For we must never forget that already one community exists where it is not believed that an advertising agent can fool even God ; and in competition with that one community all our nations are handicapped.

While we use the brief lives of millions of men and women in the poisonous task of hypnotizing their fellows into absurd beliefs about a thousand commodities, Russia is saving all that energy and putting most of it into imposing a fanatical belief in the rightness and perfection of communism. It does not matter that communism may not be right or perfect : as between a community dissipating its strictly limited human energy on the worthless and incredibly extravagant technique of advertising, and a community concentrating upon a propaganda which strengthens its unity and its power, victory in the struggle for existence must be a foregone conclusion.

### 36

Or consider how you and I buy our motor-car. Neither of us is an engineer. If the slightest little abnormality disturbs the working of the mysteries from which we distil the divine adventure of speed

## EVERYDAY LIFE IN 1960

we rush to a man in a garage for assistance. We know enough to raise the bonnet and shake our heads and that is all. And yet we are perfectly prepared to choose between fifty rival models on the evidence supplied to us in finely printed brochures, which are four-fifths narcotic and one-fifth aphrodisiac.

Suppose a club of one thousand men hired a competent engineer to whom each member could say: "I want a car to take the family, wife and so many children, out at the week-end, my income is so and so a year, I have space for a garage so many feet wide; I shall or shall not want to exchange it for a better car next year; I have saved up so much, but I want to be careful about running expenses; what is the best car for me to buy?" Suppose this club were able by this means to dispense with all the aids of "salesmanship" and to deduct the cost saved from the price of the car. It is very clear that its members would not only save money but that each would get a car more appropriate for their individual needs; for they would be depending on an honest expert, rather than the suggestions of a not too scrupulous hypnotist.

Now it is quite impossible for us to organize a consumers' soviet of this sort in the midst of modern life; we are inevitably the slaves of the other system. We must pay for the fine printing of the brochure, for the business-psychology training of its authors, for the smart clothes of the salesman, for neon lights, for pictures of lovely ladies on all the billboards defacing our country roads, for all sorts of undisclosed commissions and pieces of amiable graft among friends, for cocktails at sales conferences, for jokes which disturb the ether without amusing us—we must pay for all these things every time we buy a car. It cannot be avoided; it is the result of being born into a

capitalist community in the last desperate period of capitalist evolution.

But suppose a community arises where people do not buy all these things whenever they buy a car, where the purchase of a car is a simple scientific act of the unhindered reasoning power; compare the chance of survival of such a community with the chances of all the other communities.

In brief; once a community arises that can do away with all the unproductive forms of human economic activity it must set the pace for all the others. Russia is such a community. Now that Russia exists, we must either find out a way to dispense with the monstrous mountain of unproductive toil that we have piled up between the true producer and the consumer or we must become obsolete. Whether we can do this without ourselves following in the steps of Russian economic development is another problem.

37

Now if we must simplify our methods of distribution or become obsolete, it is clear that the total amount of work for everybody will be diminished. Salesmanship and advertisement will be shown up for the hollow shams they are and their practitioners will have to find other occupations. Can they hope to become *makers*, instead of mere *sellers*, of goods? Surely the ingenuity of science can find an unceasing number of new things with which to raise, or at least complicate, the standard of living?

No! It is virtually certain that none of the great industrial nations will ever see as many man-hours of work used on making goods in proportion to their population as in the nineteen-twenties, before the great depression set in. It is unfortunate that the

## EVERYDAY LIFE IN 1960

extravagant mysticism of the "Technocrats" has brought everything they said into disrepute, for there is nothing more certain, nor more serious, when we try to read the future, than the reality of technological unemployment, which they were the first to bring to the popular notice.

Consider these few facts :

In 1899 in the U.S.A. thirty-two thousand men ground 471 million bushels of flour.

In 1929 twenty-four thousand men (eight thousand less) ground 546 million bushels (nearly a hundred million more).

In 1900 it required seventy man-hours of work to produce a ton of steel. In 1929 it required only eleven.

Both in 1916 and in 1929 just over 900,000 tons of copper were produced in America, but for every eight men employed in the previous year, there were only six in the later year.

In 1919 it required 313 man-hours to produce an American motor-car ; in 1929 only 92 man-hours.

In printing (as an example of lesser industry) it was possible for a man to print 1,000 letter-heads in an hour in 1901 ; in 1929 he could produce 20,000.

In every branch of industry machines are replacing man-power so rapidly that the increase of demand up to any conceivable limit will never materially increase the amount of work to be done. The process has been obscured to some extent by the childish complication of the labour of distribution, at which we have been looking.

Now if this is true, why is it that in all human communities you find men crying for work, and other men bitterly opposing any reduction of the hours of labour ? At the moment industry is being carried

on with a certain number of people working eight hours a day and a certain number altogether unemployed. Let us imagine a community in which there are twenty million industrial workers, of whom ten million are unemployed and the rest working eight hours a day. That would be typical of actual conditions. Why cannot things be arranged so that all alike are working four hours a day ?

Because so long as goods are produced, not because you and I want them but because the manufacturer wants a profit, it will be to his advantage to have a large number of people unemployed and half-starved so that if any of his workers talk about higher wages it will be very easy to find others anxious to take their places. It is an axiom of orthodox economics that capitalism needs a pool of unemployed labour to keep wages down, and it is only when this pool becomes so large as to cause a menace (for a wageless man cannot buy your goods) that unemployment becomes regrettable in the eyes of the capitalist.

But suppose any one community set about organizing its work without any other consideration at all except the sufficiency of the community in the struggle for survival ; suppose the mere fact that it is more profitable for a certain group of people to organize hours of labour so that some work long and others not at all was not allowed to weigh ; suppose a planned economy using the best machines for production and reasonable methods of distribution took the place of our licensed chaos ; what would happen to the other communities that did not follow the same course ?

Compare, if you will, the chances of a free capitalist democracy like England with a thoroughly organized totalitarian state, where normal industry occupied the population for three days in the week, and the other

three were given over to a frenzied patriotic preparation of force and fury over against the day of manifest destiny. Can there be the slightest doubt which form of community would survive? Is it not clear that in such a case the one that kept to the old work hours and methods for the sake of the profit motive and rugged individualism would be ultimately destroyed by the other?

And is it not indisputable that we have entered into precisely such a situation as that to-day? Leaving out altogether the "menace" of communism, consider the implications of German and Italian modifications of traditional capitalism. It is not only the communist but the totalitarian of the Right who tells us that inexorable law has pronounced the doom of the profit motive. And with the profit motive the whole economics of a work-infested universe becomes meaningless; instead of labour being the main occupation of man, he must relegate most of it to the machines and then he will find himself faced with the dangerous dragon of leisure.

For that leisure is dangerous at present nobody can deny; Satan finds mischief for idle hands to do. Humanity has been so busy organizing its initial fight with nature that it is not prepared, now that that fight is won and our minds set free to enjoy the victory, to do anything else. Once more the evolution of tools has forced upon humanity a fundamental change in human attitudes for which nothing in political philosophy has prepared us.

Mankind is rushing towards a future where there will be twenty-one hours in the day during which the individual will not be a slave to work. Will he pass at once to peaceful philosophizing and the contemplation of the beauty of nature? It does not

seem likely. There will be a phase during which every hour of leisure gained will be appropriated by the state to strengthen itself against the rest in the struggle for existence. You and I may not like this prophecy, but that does not invalidate it.

We may sum up the situation thus : the evolution of tools has made hard labour virtually unnecessary ; nothing but the profit motive stands in the way of a three-hour day. The communities which can organize themselves first to profit from this new leisure will find that it has immense survival value ; for they can appropriate the saved energy for the economic, military and intellectual strengthening of themselves against their rivals.

Therefore a time is at hand when owing to the evolution of tools the profit motive instead of being an asset in the struggle for survival (as it most undoubtedly was until the new tools changed the circumstances) will be a handicap. Because it requires more energy to be used in maintaining the standard of living, it will leave less energy over for the strengthening of the community as a whole ; and communities that remain faithful to it will be fighting with one arm tied behind their backs.

38

And what of the new leisure ? When our slaves, the machines, do most of the work, what shall we be allowed to do with the hours gained from slavery ?

We shall be able to cultivate our minds. But in what directions ? By the establishment of more Browning societies and in poetry-reading competitions ? By trying to climb Mount Everest more often and continual rediscovery of the Poles ? By contemplating the beauties of nature through microscopes,

## EVERYDAY LIFE IN 1960

or more romantically, according to our temperament? By folk-dancing or amateur theatricals, in private conversation and public debate? Yes, and no. A leisured world will doubtless be a better-educated world, but before we rejoice light-heartedly at this prospect, we had better ask ourselves what education is likely to mean.

We need have no hesitation in making a prophecy as a sounding-board for our thoughts.

### PROPHECY NO. XVI

THERE WILL BE COMPULSORY EDUCATION FOR  
ALL UNTIL TWENTY-ONE.

There is a sort of cheerful optimist who blandly short-circuits any argument about the future by saying: "What we want is more education; when people are more educated they will see that you cannot have capitalism"—or communism or fascism—or whatever it may be that he does not want people to have.

Our earlier chapters will have suggested the limitations of such a doctrine, but no History of the Future can neglect the question of the probable future of education. The liberal philosophers of the Industrial Revolution encouraged a simple faith in the effects of education and saw them to be very much the same as those produced by an effective pill. A pill brings health, which is an obvious good, therefore there can be no argument about the goodness of pills. Society has its diseases; what society wants is health; education is the thing that brings social health; therefore there can be no argument about the goodness of education.

The trouble is that several different definitions of social health are possible and what one philosopher



## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

regards as social health will seem to another a ghastly disease.

If education were a means of teaching people to think logically there would be no more disputing its value ; but education has always been and will always be a means of creating the sort of society which is healthy from the point of view of the forces controlling education.

That is true, moreover, and must be true, of the sort of education given to their children by the most enlightened parents ; the child is forced to conform to ideals, it may be ideals of freedom and so-called self-discipline, but nevertheless it is *forced to conform*. And there has never been a government which itself created, or permitted others to create, a system of education which cast doubts upon the perfect virtue and beauty of the established order. In the height of post-war madness there were parents and virgins burdened with thwarted parental instincts whose idea of right teaching was to say to the younger generation, "Darlings, we don't know anything, and we have made a mess of everything, so go ahead and let us help you to be yourselves" ; but there has never been a government quite so suicidally stupid ; and there never will be. No community will ever exist which establishes its social education on freedom of thought ; common sense and guilty conscience alike will prevent it.

The history of British education may be taken as typical of what must always be. There are those who still believe that in the middle of the nineteenth century a nonconformist conscience, free from the promptings of self-interest, and working in a vacuum of eternal ideals, decreed that education, the gateway to the stars, should be given freely to all alike ; hence

the Education Act of 1870. Those who have this childlike faith in the great Victorians should read the parliamentary debates which preceded the passage of that Act.

The sentiments expressed were precisely the same as those which underlay the Prussian model of which the English was a copy. They find an echo too in the following edict, issued by the Prussian Crown in 18

For a long time I have been occupied with the thought how to make the school useful for the purpose of counter-acting the spread of socialistic and communistic ideas. In the first place, it is the province of the school to lay the foundation, by fostering the fear of God and the love of the Fatherland, of a sound understanding of the conditions of government and of social life. But I am obliged to recognize the fact that, at a time when social democratic errors and misrepresentations are spread abroad with increased ardour, the school must make more vigorous efforts to further the knowledge of what is true, of what is actually the fact, and what is practicable in this world. It must strive to establish, in the minds of those who are still young, the conviction that the doctrines of social democracy are not only at variance with divine command and Christian morality, but also actually impracticable and fatal in their consequences alike to the individual and to the community. The history of modern times down to the present day must be introduced into the curriculum more than hitherto, and the pupils must be shown that the executive power of the state alone can protect for each individual his family, his freedom, and his rights. Young people must be made to realize how the kings of Prussia have striven to raise the condition of the working classes in progressive development from the statutory reforms of Frederick the Great and from the abolition of villeinage to the present day.

How very childish this looks to-day. And yet it was not only natural but inevitable: national education then and now is essentially a weapon used by

the governing groups to convince everybody that their methods are not only lawful, but according to the laws of nature and of God. The only difference between the founders of national education in England and Hitler is that the modern dictator sees his job more clearly and has at his command a far better technique.

Our own government being founded upon what are called democratic ideals prefers to sacrifice truth to propaganda only half-heartedly except in war-time; the result from your point of view and mine is a refreshing gain, but from the point of view of the struggle for survival it is a mere weakness. And since inexorable law sends the weak to the wall, only those communities in which education is a ruthless weapon of social propaganda will survive. That is the real strength of Russia, Germany and Italy to-day.

Of course, when we speak like this of those three countries we are speaking objectively and from outside the thing of which we speak. To the Russian, the German, and the Italian there is no sacrifice of truth; there is rather a passionate devotion to the truth. It does not matter in the least that the Russian truth is incompatible with the German, for the strength of peoples in the struggle for survival does not begin with being right but with believing that you are right. As between the cocksure community and the sceptical there is a very uneven combat. It is only when two cocksure communities face one another that one or the other may have to pay for being wrong as well as cocksure.

And so since inexorable law decrees the extinction of any community that does not use education as a weapon for its own survival, we shall see in the future a more and more ruthless acceptance of the idea that

## EVERYDAY LIFE IN 1960

national education is nothing but organized propaganda. Any intellectual doubts will be discouraged as being liable to give comfort to the enemy.

We already see in Germany a group of biological fallacies taught as if there were no other teaching possible ; while in Russia any dissenter from an economic orthodoxy to which economists elsewhere busily deny validity is regarded as being not merely unscientific but immoral. In the future we are going to see an increase of this attitude.

Indeed we have reached a stage in human development when a certain ugly fact can no longer be kept hidden, namely, that there can never be a universally accepted body of truth so long as there remain economic and political divisions between man and man leading to open economic and political warfare. All knowledge has propaganda value when properly handled, and nobody will be agreed as to the nature of pure knowledge, the naked truth, until warring groups cease to derive strength from partial truth.

It cannot be very long, therefore, before all human communities take from the individuals composing them all the leisure that the new tools give in order that it may be used for educational, that is propaganda purposes. It is an astonishing sight to see the children of the world to-day. On May 1, 1936, I was watching the United Front marching through the Paseo del Prado of Madrid. It was a magnificent sight ; the brilliant red-shirted communists and the brilliant blue-shirted socialists, marching arm in arm singing the Internationale. The little United Front Pioneers—four, five, and six years old—almost fell over in the effort to raise their clenched fists to the skies at the same time as they kept on walking ; and as they went they chanted, " We want secular schools ;

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

we want secular schools ", a fact which, as I watched them, I begged leave to doubt. No product this of education, one felt, but only of mass hypnotism.

And yet here was an example of the one force growing in strength to oppose the black-shirted balillas of Italy mobilized in muling and puking infancy to civilize the Abyssinian, and the brown shirtlets of the land that once was Goethe's.

The world's youth marching in coloured shirts, chanting irreconcilable wants, and approaching a common grave. What have we to put against it? " Well, darling, these are very difficult questions and one person thinks one thing and another another; and you must make up your own mind when you grow up." Will that keep your son and my son out of the grave being dug for all their generation? Do we prepare happiness for them by encouraging them to stand back and see in all the coloured shirts of a crazy world something from which their more liberal education saves them? Would it not be better to let them choose one shirt or another and an anodyne in the intoxicating poison of mass feeling? Soldiers are given rum to help them to die, why should not our children go down to their deaths hypnotized by the rhythm of a million marching comrades?

This is not the way that men brought up on Mill on Liberty should talk, but how then should they talk?

We shall give over our children to the state for education until the age of twenty-one. That education will consist in emotionalizing half-truths in the interest of the crusading spirit. Our only hope is that one of the shirts will turn out to be of the right colour. At least we had better choose the shirt that seems to hold out the best promise of a universal

organization of mankind without national or economic barriers, for only in such a world will it be possible for individuals to think the naked truth for themselves.

39

Although most of the increasing leisure time will be taken for the next two or three generations by the state for its own purposes, there will be some remnants of time left over and they will be spent in a material world very different from the present inconvenient and chaotic muddle. We may not like the plain indications as to what our future mental treatment is likely to be, but there can be no doubt that our bodies are going to be more and more comfortable. We shall be able to do more. We shall have more tools.

It is hard to exaggerate the way in which material comfort is being held up at present by our attachment to the profit motive in industry; but it is certainly true that in every kind of industrial field inferior products are being turned out because many quite practicable improvements would upset somebody's dividends.

Manufacturers are of course living in terror lest their competitors may get a new material, or process, which will destroy their own product, but if they are able to get hold of a patent or a monopoly so surely that they need not fear someone else using it, they are well content to leave it languishing in the form of blue-prints.

For instance, our captains of industry spend sleepless nights worrying as to how to be sure that their products shall be durable enough for people to buy, but not too durable to require replacement. Many of our everyday necessities are deliberately made as

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

perishable as possible. The history of razor blades is typical. It needs great ingenuity and knowledge of alloys to produce so rotten a blade as the market provides. With our modern knowledge of steel we could produce a blade which would never wear out at all for a very modest sum ; but then who would make a profit ?

Or consider the motor-car. It is a product of engineers so brilliant that the sales force have to use all the genius of modern psychology to persuade men to get rid of their old car before it is worn out and to buy another. Without annual models and fake improvements where would the motor industry be ? It is disgusting to see so much human ingenuity going to gilding the lily of human technical skill with the counterfeit gold of futile gadgets.

But all this is coming to an end : soon the industrial effort of the community will be concentrated upon making every individual as well equipped as possible. We can confidently prophesy some of the ways in which this will be done :

First,

### PROPHECY NO. XVII

POWER WILL BE SUPPLIED TO ALL ON THE  
SAME TERMS AS WATER AND DRAINAGE TO-DAY.

Among the many who are doomed to destruction by the march of events none are more certainly destined to unemployment than the owners, shareholders and directors of our curiously named Public Utility Companies. The fact that some communities try to dispense electric current by a method which retains all the spoils of private competitive industry without the curb of open competition shows our Age of Stupidity at its most facetious. The farce could not

## EVERYDAY LIFE IN 1960

have continued as long as it has but for the millions spent by the people concerned to corrupt politicians into leaving them alone. Material civilization is high or low in the scale according to the amount of power at the elbow of every individual, and to allow one's community deliberately to step down in the evolutionary scale in order that the Insulls of all lands may send conscience money to support opera is an indication of the immaturity of the human animal as a social being.

Evidence has accumulated on all sides that when the community, town or state, owns its electricity and gas, everybody benefits by cheaper power. Moreover, there can be no doubt that in the next thirty years new sources of power far more convenient than our present sources will be tapped. It must only be a question of time before we learn how to store electricity as easily as we store water. Nothing except obsolete industrial organization stops us from using coal in ways a hundred times more efficient than now ; and it is only recently that the idea of doing away with the transporting of millions of tons of heavy mineral and transposing it instead into oils and electric current at the pit-head has been considered practical politics.

Power, which once meant human arms and hands in action, has come to mean the pressing of a button and leaving the rest to the natural migrations of obedient electrons. Factories have been emptied of human beings ; where once a thousand men toiled, one man watches a machine that can do everything the human worker did except go on strike and buy the goods it produces. Outside the factories, as a consequence of this, are the exiled workers.

New forms of power have come and man has tried



## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

to fit them into the old economic organization. It cannot be done. The relationship between you and the source from which you buy current to light your house is bound to be different from the relationship between your grandfather and the source from which he bought candles. Because we have not as yet recognized this the coming of fresh power has meant chaos. When we change our institutions so as to use the new power to the full everyday existence will be fundamentally changed. For you will press a button and put into action the energy of a hundred men ; and then those hundred men who would once have had to answer to your call will not be needed. That is the adjustment which our social existence has to make.

And if the man-power that has gone in times past to make goods is to become obsolete, consider what is likely to happen to the raw material. When you buy something you are exchanging your own labour, or the labour of other people that has passed somehow into your control, for the labour that has been expended on a piece of raw material plus the cost of that raw material. The raw material costs something because it is owned by somebody. Remembering this, consider what will be the effects of our next prophecy, No. XVIII.

### 40

ABUNDANT NEW RAW MATERIALS WILL MAKE  
FOOD, CLOTHING, AND OTHER NECESSITIES UNI-  
VERSALLY OBTAINABLE.

In the last thirty years several new raw materials have come and made their mark. Perhaps the most spectacular is artificial silk ; although new metals and alloys such as commercial aluminium have been as

important. But these are as nothing compared to the scientific discoveries which have just not been made yet.

Consider one of these : why is it that a cow can eat the dry stalks of plants, while human beings cannot? Because part of the cow's equipment is an internal chemical laboratory equipped with all the apparatus for turning cellulose into starch and sugar. What the cow can do, man can do ; not in his stomach, but outside. It is a chemical possibility to do what the cow does, but at present it is not a commercial proposition as the process is more costly than the obtaining of starch and sugar from other sources. But that is a purely temporary state of affairs ; sooner or later science will be able to turn all the dry grass on a hillside, all the timber in a forest, into digestible nutriment for human beings. Provided the raw material of food and clothing is not allowed to be a monopoly in anybody's hands, the only thing that makes it cost anything is the amount of human labour required to bring it from one place to another, the time required to bring it to maturity, or the artificial value which comes from there being more people wanting it than can be supplied. Now when science creates useful foodstuffs and clothing out of the refuse at your door prices will vanish to almost nothing.

Of course, any community that maintains an organization based on property and monopoly and free competition will not benefit to the same extent, and will therefore fail in the struggle for the survival of the fittest. Other communities having substituted power for crude manual labour, having eliminated the waste in time and energy of absurd means of distribution, having taken full advantage of dirt-cheap raw materials will continue to survive.

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

It is hard to imagine life in a world where common necessities cease to be a matter of effort or worry. We can only try to visualize it by analogy. To-day there is no highly civilized country where a penniless man could possibly die of thirst ; water at least is provided to the destitute free of charge, as is also the air he breathes. But why shouldn't some enterprising merchant sell special air at a penny a lungful ? Absurd, you say ? Well, it is quite possible that in twenty-five years' time it will seem just as absurd that there should ever have been a time when a destitute man could not get the bare minimum of the other things needed to keep body and soul together. We let our outcasts put their mouths below a tap of cold water ; there is every reason to believe that it will cost little more in twenty-five years for them to get carbohydrates, proteins and the rest in exactly the same way.

What makes it harder than necessary to visualize this state of affairs is that as we are organized to-day any new discovery which leads to cheapness and abundance automatically leaves ruin in its path. Our economists and politicians are wearing their lives out in the battle against abundance ; our farmers are praying for bad weather ; our moralists are deprecating thrift ; we all hope for higher prices ere long. But all this is an effort to put the clock of evolution back. We have new tools which have made our old ways obsolete instead of accepting that and changing our ways we do our best to put the new tools out of action. We are like the razor-blade manufacturer buying up patents so as to keep the better blade off the market ; he can only do it so long as a competitor does not break through. We can only do it so long as no community organizes to make the best

## EVERYDAY LIFE IN 1960

use of increasing abundance. One community is already so organizing ; and so the game is up.

### 41

It is clear that life in 1960 will be deprived of several things which seem most essential to life to-day. For whereas to-day work is the chief way by which mankind can fill time, there will soon be comparatively little work to do. Moreover, it requires a very powerful exercise of the imagination to think of everyday life passed in an atmosphere of complete abundance, and yet we have only begun to see that scarcity of necessities is a passing condition rapidly coming to an end.

If we are to try and understand life as it will be led in 1960 we must begin by realizing that food, clothing and shelter will cost as little as air. Science has simply to learn to change cellulose into foodstuffs at a negligible expenditure of human energy and we shall eat as we breathe. Science has only to go a few steps farther in mechanically producing textiles in factories where there is nothing to do but press a button and we shall dress as do the lilies of the field. Society has only to have a strong enough control over the individual to limit population and there will be room for all rent free.

It costs to live precisely what monopolists can force us to give for raw material, plus the human labour used to turn the raw material into useful objects. If all monopolies are eliminated, if science turns every rubbish heap into valuable raw material, if no human energy is wasted in silly methods of distribution, if manufacture is almost entirely a matter of machinery, the cost of living will be negligible. Only what still has a scarcity value will have to be paid for, and

that will be little more than human inventiveness. The man who devises new machinery, the artist, the man with a genius for amusing the rest of us, in so far as they will need a material encouragement not to withhold their labour, these alone will be paid.

I do not say that such a state of affairs will be universal by 1960, but it is the condition towards which we are inevitably trending, a condition wherein our ordinary notions of labour and the rewards of labour will alike be meaningless. It is a state of affairs which will be denied and opposed by every traditionalist, just as to-day, when for the first time man is able to produce over-abundance of natural goods, the traditionalists cannot get out of their heads a picture of mankind starvingly wrestling with untamed nature, a picture which alone would justify orthodox methods of economic thought.

Now this condition of life is coming to our descendants as a result of the inevitable evolution of human tools ; and the benefits will be reaped by those communities that find themselves able to avail themselves most rapidly of these new tools. It is therefore of great interest to note that one of the changes that have come to capitalism in its present stages is that whereas once capitalism was admirably equipped to avail itself of every scientific advance, to-day capitalism is forced to retard and hold up scientific advance in many different directions. The capitalist has reason to be afraid of the scientist although the scientist is his slave, for the scientist, the maker of tools, will in the end destroy capitalism with the tools he makes.

Thus the force which drives human evolution along its way in our time is a combination of the worker dispossessed by the machine and the scientist who makes the dispossessing machine. These two together

## EVERYDAY LIFE IN 1960

find themselves thwarted by the vested interests which are holding up the remodelling of social forms to correspond with the requirements of the new tools. Together they are an invincible enemy of the *status quo*.

But a population of human beings remade by the state become super-biologist and a world of such abundance that work and scarcity are reduced to a comparatively negligible part of human reckoning—these are but the raw material of the drama that is to be played. Drama past, present, and future is a matter of human relationships ; and it is to a consideration of these that we must now turn.

## CHAPTER VIII

### WHITHER HUMAN NATURE ?

42

WE began this study of the future by considering certain inexorable laws of evolution, which throw a very different light on human history past, present and future, from what our natural inclinations would show us. Now that we are approaching the most emotionally charged part of our subject, it is essential to refresh our minds with a review of those laws.

Consider the penguin : a bird whose wings are useless tools for transport through the air, but perfect tools for transport through water. How came this splendid adaptation ? No penguin by taking thought can add a cubit to its stature ; no penguin thought itself into possession of perfect oars.

It was the material environment of a world of ice where the only food is fish that created the change. The ancestral penguin blood contributed nothing but a useful power of variability ; the surrounding material conditions permitted useful variations to survive, and destroyed useless ones ; and so in the course of ages the penguin became what it is to-day.

Man and his societies are products of precisely the same process both biologically and socially. Environment presses on them incessantly ; those individuals who are most capable, thanks to their having inherited

## WHITHER HUMAN NATURE?

useful variations, of dealing with their environment, survive. As a social animal, man transfers much of the responsibility for his fitness to the social unit ; and those social units which are most suitably organized to deal with the environment survive.

Now a very large part of man's environment is man-made. Instead of being dependent, like the penguin, on the slow passage of time, and upon haphazard variations, for his tools, he makes them himself ; he is indeed the tool-making animal ; and man's tools are, as it were, detachable limbs. They react upon his evolution in exactly the same way as a penguin's wing reacts upon a penguin's evolution.

Now the penguin's wing is only valuable, provided the bird tries to live in the environment that called it forth. Let a penguin try to live in a Kentish wood, instead of on an ice-floe, and the penguin will not succeed in surviving. In short, an adaptation is not only a valuable thing, it is a limiting thing. A wing allows the penguin to survive on an ice-floe but prevents it from surviving elsewhere. And a man's detachable limbs, the tools that he makes, react in precisely the same way. For example, the steam-engine is a useful tool ; it helps the men who can use it in their struggle for existence against all rivals who do not live in an age of steam. But it is a limiting tool also ; once the steam-engine has come, it is impossible for man to live as he did before it came.

Now man's chief difficulties come because he is able to invent new tools much more rapidly than he is able to change his habits of living and of thinking. There is always a lag between mechanical invention and cultural tradition. Man is for ever dragged in opposite directions by his technology and his customs ;



but in the end technology always wins. Man is uncomfortable until his old habits have caught up with his new tools.

When we think of a penguin, we think of its wings first of all, because they are a very obvious example of adaptation to environment ; but if we studied the penguin closely we should find that everything else about it is equally adapted ; its habits too, of courtship, of nesting, of bringing up its young, everything is adapted to an ice age. And if the antarctic conditions of life changed, then all these would gradually change also.

It is the same with man. Every change of environment must lead to a change of habits, of feelings, of ideals. And since that part of his environment which he makes himself, his tools, is the most important part, it is the evolution of human tools that has most influence on the habits of man : the coming of steam and the coming of electricity are examples of changes of environment which have forced mankind to change all its habits. Not merely the economic system, but the ethical system, the religious system, the emotional and intellectual picture of the universe, are changed by a change of tools.

At this point in the argument the average mind revolts. It is hard to believe that the coming of steam can possibly affect a man's ideas of right and wrong, for example, and yet the interrelationship cannot honestly be denied. It is no less true because certain uncritical economic determinists persist in stretching facts and generalizing history too simply in order to prove their point ; often things are far too complicated to admit of any proof at all, but nevertheless we can perceive the guiding principle behind them.

## WHITHER HUMAN NATURE?

Let us start, then, from this hypothesis: the environment dictates to the living being how it shall manifest its life; and with man the most important factor in the environment is the complex of tools he himself makes; so that to understand how the human being will manifest its life æsthetically, morally, religiously, in the future we have to consider how human tools are evolving. Just as changing tools dominate political, military, economic events so they condition human relationships, human nature itself.

With this in our minds let us consider the future of those most vital of human relationships, parenthood and marriage.

### 43

A little thought will convince us that:

BY 1975 PARENTS WILL HAVE CEASED TO BRING  
UP THEIR CHILDREN IN PRIVATE FAMILY UNITS.

It is not a question as to whether we like the idea of a home, a nestful of innocent children looking with adoration and respect to the father and mother who gave them life. It is not a question as to whether we ourselves would have been better or worse off under a homeless condition. It is simply that the evolution of tools, of the dominant man-made environment, is making the idea of a home, as it has appeared in polite literature for a few thousand years, obsolete and impracticable.

It is very hard for us to think of the family as a thing which exists only to do a job for society as a whole. We are used to religious and ethical ideas which imply that the family is something that exists by virtue of its own excellence, and that unless the family is maintained in a state of eternal purity life

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

on earth will not be worth living and life in heaven will be lost. Those who hold this simple but preposterous idea are very careful not to define what they mean by the family; and they rather like to suggest that the family of to-day is, and ought to be, like the family described in the Old Testament—that is, the breeding unit adapted to the needs of a pastoral civilization.

Such a family cannot be safeguarded in the future, if only because it had long ago ceased to exist when the evolution of tools changed our way of living from the pastoral to the industrial. Whether the passing of the pastoral family, the patriarchal family, as we usually call it, is a good thing or a bad thing is purely a matter of personal taste, but it is not a burning question of practical politics, since it was inevitable.

The reason why the family unit was so powerful in the pastoral stage of civilization is that ninety-nine hundredths of both work and recreation among shepherds and primitive cultivations took place within that unit. To-day practically no work at all is done in the home, except the work of maintaining the home itself; all other work is done in the factory, the shop, or the office. Where you still have work done in or near the home, as on a farm, there you still have a family unit surviving, weakened, however, by other changes.

To-day practically no recreation takes place in the home. Nearly all amusement is at the cinema, in motor-cars, at public dances. When the home tries to provide a bait to induce the young to remain within it, its method is to let the outside world into its dull interior by way of the Wireless. For the rest the only home that most people find amusing is someone else's home.

To-day practically no education takes place in the

## WHITHER HUMAN NATURE?

home. It is not only that schools claim the time and energy of children from their earliest years, but that the other social channels of education, such as the newspaper and the cinema, all function outside the home. Gone are the days when education meant the accepting of traditional lore from the lips of god's vicegerent, the father, and from the more practical domestic lips of the mother. "Home influence" is little more than a pious phrase. Parents cannot get the love and respect of their children by virtue of a mere biological relationship; they have to rely on the same human qualities as other people.

In short, even if the home is still a sort of centre where people sleep and sometimes eat, modern life makes all our interests centrifugal from it. What indeed is left of the home?

Nothing but the one element that seems to be of doubtful value at any time in the history of the family—the "family complex". Even without defending the complete picture of modern psycho-analysis, it is very clear that a home deprived of all practical economic value is likely to be an emotional danger-spot. Probably what kept Abraham, Isaac and Jacob from cracking up under the stress of some "father complex", or "mother complex", was that they were always too busy to become emotionally involved with one another. Labour-saving devices have given us enough spare time to become neurotics.

It has become increasingly evident therefore that the family unit is economically wasteful and emotionally dangerous, and that it cannot stand in the way of changing circumstances. That does not mean that anyone is going to vote for the abolition of the family, or that a dictator is going to forbid children from talking to their parents; it means that the process of

disintegration that has already gone far will continue at accelerated pace. Children will go to school earlier, will stay away oftener, and the home will be reduced to a dormitory equipped with good modern plumbing. Since parents will do less and less to educate or look after their children they cannot expect to be allowed to batten on them emotionally ; mothers will have to stop living vicariously in their daughters and fathers will no longer look to the chances of bullying which the home affords so that they may feel Napoleonic. Whether parents and children will get on better with one another when parents have nothing to fall back on but their own merits as the key to love or respect will be a matter for individuals to discover for themselves.

It is not the coming of communism that has made the destruction of the family unit inevitable ; that unit was destroyed by the industrial revolution and the demands of capitalism. This is not to deny that many captains of industry afford charming illustrations of the virtues and graces of the family life ; indeed, nobody is better equipped for such a life than the man who is rich enough to reproduce somewhat artificially the pastoral conditions which the patriarchal family needs—a large country house surrounded by gardens and grounds, a private tutor and plenty of idle and not too intelligent womenfolk.

Nevertheless, the ladies who speak on platforms about the need of safeguarding the institution of the family are themselves the product of an economic system which has destroyed the very thing they seek to perpetuate. Their own ability to be patriarchal depends on the depriving of thousands of others of a like privilege ; that their families may live, thousands of other families have been throttled in the

## WHITHER HUMAN NATURE?

slums and suburbs of industrial towns. The man who makes a thing lives in a wretched row, from which his children will run as soon and as often as they can; the man who sells the thing lives in a modern flat with labour-saving devices and a wireless set, which is just as uncondusive to a family atmosphere; meanwhile the man who gets the profits can still fancy himself to be like Abraham, and his wife may fulminate against Moscow for its attacks on patriarchal morality.

In short, it is the evolution of tools that has this and all other institutions by the throat. When factories came the family ceased to be a work centre, and the steady advance of industrial town conditions has deprived it of being any other sort of unit as well. All that is lacking is an acknowledgement of the fact. We still persist in trying to make the family unit a reality, to the great psychological discomfort of all concerned. Our tools have brought about conditions in which it is a misery for two generations to be perpetually in one another's way, but a nostalgia for the life of our ancestors makes us deny that this is so.

But the new relationships between parents and children have been obscured by certain facts about the sexual life, which concern the home-savers to a far greater degree than they realize. We cannot understand the fate that has overtaken the home without careful study of how the raw material of our sex-life has changed.

### 44

A casual attention to apologists for the patriarchal family institution is enough to convince us that they are not chiefly concerned with the good of children, or the dignity of the parental relationship. As often

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

as not their arguments boil down to very primitive feelings about ritual purity and impurity.

Their feelings are those which gave birth to what we call Christian Sexual Morality. Now the reason why Christian sexual morality was accepted by men for so long was not because it was a successful though ruthless conspiracy against human happiness, as many muddle-headed opponents of orthodoxy seem to think. It was accepted as a well-organized attempt to express the natural reactions of human nature to the sexual act at a time when those reactions were very different from what they are now, thanks to the evolution of certain tools.

If we eliminate from our life soap and hygiene, prophylaxis against venereal disease, and contraceptives ; and if we substitute for our modern physiology the physiology of Galen and Aristotle, the sexual act becomes obscene, unsafe and degrading, and its consequences inevitable, whether for good in offspring or for evil in disease. And against such a reality the attitude of the Christian ascetic is reasonable and right. Christian asceticism was a reasonable practical philosophy in the days before soap, permanganate of potash and contraceptives.

The explanation of our new and rebellious attitudes towards the sexual morality of the Middle Ages is to be found in the transformation of the sexual act into something quite different, thanks to the evolution of practical science. Two or three material mechanical devices have had more effect on morals than all the metaphysicians ; indeed an intelligent history of sex would show that the moralists have changed because of the devices, without which their speculations could not have entered a human mind.

Hygiene and sex is a neglected historic subject ;

## WHITHER HUMAN NATURE ?

and it is as well for the student who sees life through the eyes of well-washed bourgeois culture to realize more vividly the significance of soap and hot water for the human experience called Love. Love in its physical aspects has been the great intoxicant of the past two or three thousand years, the true inspirer of art and poetry, the flower of individual lives ; yet it has only been during brief periods when people washed that their ideas of physical love have been raised above those of cats on the garden wall. Only now and then in history, and even then only among very limited classes, has the sexual act become, under the influence of cleanliness, an æsthetic thing, capable of inspiring art and literature. Whenever you find a leisured class capable of taking baths, you find romance and love as a fit theme for poetry ; elsewhere it remains a simple and unsung act of excretion.

The ancient Hebrews bathed frequently and in consequence gave us the Song of Songs. The early Christians, whose strength came from the Great Unwashed elements of Rome, fully realized that Bathsheba fell because of a bath, that Susannah nearly fell for the same reason and that baths would always make puritanism difficult ; but because a fastidious epicurean called Solomon had got himself mixed up with the Sacred Legend they had to disinfect his indiscreet poem, the product of cleanliness, by discovering a symbolical and highly respectable meaning for it.

The Romans of the great imperial periods bathed incessantly, to the great destruction of their sexual morals ; and Tertullian and other Christians of his day were quite right in seeing that a public bath was an even greater enemy to the true religion than any number of pagan temples.



## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

In twelfth-century Provence feudal lords and ladies spent enormous spaces of time under the pleasing influence of hot water, tired knights being scrubbed by handmaidens just as Ulysses had been in Homeric days and with precisely the same results—over-genial moral standards and a perfect deluge of love poetry. Only where the use of the tools of hygiene could be forbidden did asceticism prosper ; for the highly intelligent Church Fathers were right that a foul skin was the Hindenburg line defending their concepts of physical negation.

Now the tools of hygiene are only recently becoming the property of the community as a whole. Hitherto they have been the privilege of the few, with the result that sexual æsthetics—which are so much more important than mere sexual habits—have been the product of a class. The languors of a Herrick and the sighs of a court poet are perfectly meaningless in a slum. When we speculate as to the future of sexual æsthetics we must bear this fact in mind and remember that it is a state of affairs which is rapidly coming to an end.

When the historian of human morals looks back from the heights of 1975 to our own days and those of our grandfathers, he will attribute the muddled state of our sexual ideas to culture lag ; he will point out how the ideals of a pre-soap epoch persisted in a world which, thanks to the reign of terror inspired by pseudo-hygienic advertisement, washed itself almost to distraction. It will be necessary for him to exercise a profound effort of the imagination to understand why sex once seemed so “ dirty ”, and perhaps nothing will help him more than a philological study of the words used by us in our unguarded moments to describe physical realities ; for these will reveal that

though the eyes are the gateway to art and science, and the ears to music, man has always learned his morals through his nose.

## 45

The reason why people persist in defending the unworkable unit which they call the family is that they regard the family as the sole justification for that "dirty" but undeniable fact, physical sexuality. We have seen, too, that nothing is needed to break down the conventional feeling that sex is sinful but a general use of modern hygiene. Hygiene lifts the sexual act from the level of an act of excretion into that of an act of secretion, and whenever this is done sex ceases to seem sinful. But that is only one way in which the evolution of tools can be shown to cause the evolution of moral ideas. We have dealt with it first because it is fundamental and at the same time obscure.

The effects of the invention of medical safeguards against venereal disease and of contraception, though they are probably not more important, are more obvious. In the Middle Ages venereal disease was appallingly frequent. Its ravages could be seen on the faces of knight and serf, of king and bishop. It must have been as likely a result of illicit intercourse as pregnancy. It is hard for us in these days of asepsis to realize imaginatively the darker adventures of the human soul in the outer courts of the temple of Aphrodite: the ghastly madness of a man entering a medieval brothel from which he would depart with very material devils gnawing into his flesh by way of God's punishment; the Light o' Love who was in very deed a flimsily disguised Death-in-Life. Can we wonder that the woman who thus destroyed the

man who desired her was so fiercely hated ; that she was the witch, the Eve who spoiled Paradise ? Can we wonder that the bitter need that led to all this came to be regarded as a seed planted in man's loins by the devil himself ?

That is why to-day, when thanks to the evolution of tools the horror has been lifted from men's hearts, it is still illegal to tell young men that two penny-worth of a certain chemical will safeguard them from the tortures of the living damned. We must not safeguard sin, the bishops cry ; so that even when science has made it unnecessary, children by the thousand are born blind, innocent women become sterile and prematurely old, and long lives are spent in expiating five minutes of careless youth. But culture lag does not last for ever ; sooner or later our ideas catch up with our technological equipment, and it is merely a matter of time before the possibility of venereal disease will cease to have a deciding fact on the " morals " of the young.

The reader will forgive me if I insist that what I have been saying is not intended as a justification or an advocacy of increased promiscuity. The historian, whether of the past or of the future, is not an advocate ; he is not called upon to say whether humanity is going to the dogs, or not ; but he is lacking in candour if he does not point out incontrovertible facts, even if they are unpleasant to those who are content with current moral standards. There is no doubt that human acts must be judged by their effects, and if in one age sexuality leads to venereal disease, and in another does not do so, then the effect being different the moral judgement must be different, or at least *will* be different in the eyes of the ordinary man. It is incontrovertible that the evolution of medical tools

## WHITHER HUMAN NATURE?

is eliminating the "sanction" of venereal disease and as practical ethical judgements are influenced by the efficacy or otherwise of sanctions, this will alter the current opinion of right and wrong. That all sorts of other considerations come into the question of sexual morality is obvious, as also that some of them are even more important than syphilis: but that syphilis is now controllable must change our ideas on sexual ethics.

We pass from soap and prophylaxis to the third great device whereby the evolution of tools has altered moral ideas, and that is contraception.

It is curious that whereas it is illegal to advertise chemicals which may be used as prophylactics against venereal disease, it is also illegal in America to sell contraceptives unless they are sold as prophylactics. On the packets that contain them is printed, "the contents of this packet are sold on the express understanding that they will be used solely for the prevention of disease". This is only the most hypocritical of the remaining restrictions on a knowledge that is becoming universal. The time is almost upon us when everyone above the age of sixteen will be aware of the whole science of contraceptives. The effect of this evolution of scientific tools can be summed up in a sweeping but thoroughly sound prophecy:

BY 1975 SEXUAL FEELING AND MARRIAGE WILL  
HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH ONE ANOTHER.

## 46

Orthodox Christian morality, with its insistence on the sanctity of the family, was a wise and efficient structure built on man's technological equipment in the days when Christianity took shape. The know-

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

ledge of the epoch being what it was, nothing better could have been produced ; if it seems inadequate to-day, it is because the evolution of tools, the technical equipment of modern civilization has altered certain fundamental facts.

Our orthodox attitude to questions of sex may be defined as the welding together into one of four separate ideas—physical passion, romantic love, procreation, and the economic partnership of one man with one woman, called marriage. When our moral ideas were formed these four ideas were naturally and necessarily linked together ; what has happened since is that, thanks to the evolution of tools, they have become unstuck.

In the first place romantic love in Christian civilization had to be welded to sexual feeling in order to reconcile men with the seamy side of a natural need. They had reached a stage of development which resented uncleanness but could not get rid of it. The general filthiness of the physical life in the Dark and Middle Ages demanded that a romantic aura, a deodorizing sentimentalism, should be affixed to physical sex in order to make it bearable. But when soap and hygiene cleansed physical life it became perfectly possible for normal people to enjoy the body without romanticizing about it, and the Church Fathers scenting this danger to morality fought it with the odour of sanctity. It was a losing battle, lost to the advancing forces of hygienic technology.

Sexual passion, however, remained indissolubly associated with procreation to a much more recent time. Universal knowledge of contraception has now broken this link ; and with it we find ourselves faced by a situation in which all four of the basic ideas once indissolubly linked by force of circumstance are

## WHITHER HUMAN NATURE?

able to stand on their own as separate human experiences, to be judged on their merits apart from all association with the others.

Thus physical sex is no longer "dirty", actually or metaphorically. It does not need to be emotionally deodorized by romantic love. Procreation is not a necessary result of physical sex. It is a matter that may be subjected to the human will. It can be ordered and arranged according to standards and factors quite separate from the physical desires of two human beings of opposite sexes, who are probably interested for the moment in nothing but themselves. It can be arranged, for example, from the point of view of the maximum advantage of the possible offspring, or of society.

It is not in the least likely that the variously conditioned sexual reactions of two human beings at the most selfish climax of their personal experiences will be the best means of securing the best children from the point of view either of the children or of society; and since the evolution of tools has destroyed the inevitability of a connection between the two, it is hardly likely that a connection which is useless and even harmful will be retained. Men and women will continue to desire one another physically, will continue to weave romantic friendships with one another, and will continue to have offspring; but the three relationships will not necessarily go together, and in the case of procreation the state will step in far more firmly than hitherto.

As to marriage it will stand or fall on its own merits as an economic function. It will not be required to whitewash man's natural sexual desire. The protectors of the institution of the family to whom we have referred a few pages back argue, "men are

beasts, therefore we must have marriage so as to pretend that they are tame beasts at least". Once the social conscience denies the beastliness of man, the argument falls to the ground and all that can be said for marriage depends on its economic value for rearing children. Modern conditions of living have reduced this value to vanishing-point.

There remains something to be said for romantic love. Is there anything left of this, once people cease to want to make excuses for physical sexual passion? Romantic love is, of course, a "flight from reality" and a certain type of person loves to dismiss Aucassin and Nicolette, Tristan and Isolde, Romeo and Juliet as unnecessary and dishonest ornamentations of the reactions of two mucous tissues. This is as true and at the same time as absurd as the reduction of the whole drama of human history to the orderly buzzings of atoms and electrons. Romantic love is a branch of art; that is to say, a device by which the individual convinces himself that there is more in life than the mere search for material bread and butter. By the time that the liquidation of the Age of Stupidity has reduced the task of satisfying daily economic needs to negligible proportions for all individuals alike, a huge vacuum of usable time will have been created. This vacuum can only be filled with useless but delightful "flights from reality"; some will soar on wings of art, others of speculative science, while others will make an art of personal relationships. Where this may lead them can still best be learned from the words which Diotima spoke long ago to Socrates.

It is natural that the breakdown of the orthodox morality should seem to be merely a loosening of the moral fibre. And it is natural that there should be

## WHITHER HUMAN NATURE?

a period during which those in revolt from what the evolution of tools has made obsolete should take to licence for want of a new morality to put in its place. But it is certain that eventually there will be not only a new but a better morality which will not be based on a mixture of distaste of dirt and fear of consequences.

Our generation does not suffer from a weakening of its moral fibre, but rather from a strengthening of the technical equipment with which to fight the decrees of the god of dirt and disease. Bring back physical dirt, prevent preventives and ignore medical precautions and we may have medieval morality once again. In short, reverse the evolution of human tools and you can repeat the history of moral ideas. If you agree that the clock cannot be put back you will content yourself with trying to understand the possibilities for moral good that will come from the right use of the advantages of a new technological age.

### 47

What, then, is the future history of the sexual relation likely to be?

In the first place we must remember that in the past it is only the sexual experience of a very small leisured class that has given birth to either sophistication or art. The very large majority of our populations are too overcrowded to find the privacy, and too economically harassed to find the carefree idleness, without which sex experience cannot become the source of complicated joys and sorrows. Our romanticists who write novels about nicely perfumed adulteries may be surprised to hear that the spice of life for the working-class couple consists largely in the exercise of a common courage in the face of difficulties borne



side by side. You do not have to go to the Middle Ages to find sex still on the level of an act of excretion. Bishops who have some æsthetic sense ought to thank their god for the couples who lie out on the grass in city parks, for they are doing the best they can to make of their passions something artistic. The real offences against decency are committed in the overcrowded atmosphere of slum shanties into which bishops never penetrate. Here you can learn all the facts of life from procreation to childbirth in the one room that, as we have seen, is soon to add to its other functions that of a gas-proof shelter.

Now every current observation suggests that the driving power of the new civilization which will end our Age of Stupidity is going to come from these hotbeds of stark realism, and not from the strata of clean and ingenious fornication. We can expect, then, a new age of puritanism broken with occasional scornful and rather doctrinaire floutings of "bourgeois morality".

It is doubtful, for example, whether the next three generations will write much love poetry, for until the pluming perquisites of a small class can be made the universal possession of all alike, sex will suffer a set-back as a major interest in daily life. Not that we are likely to see anything quite so retrograde as when the great unwashed masses of Rome took to Christianity and won cultural supremacy for themselves, for even under capitalism it has been impossible to withhold hygiene from the masses; and though the United Front of the future will gain its more serious ideology from Moscow, its young men and maidens are marching forward with one eye cocked on Hollywood.

## WHITHER HUMAN NATURE?

There is, however, another side to the future of sex that must be remembered. We have shown how the state will become super-biologist and control the numbers and qualities of its human population. One of the effects of this will be a decline in the supremacy of the sexual passion over many individuals' minds.

Hitherto every art of persuasion has been called into play to convince everybody that sex means more to them than any other experience. This has been largely because there has been property in persons, both in wives and in sons and daughters. More than one vested interest has been vitally concerned in keeping people's breeding proclivities working overtime. Eliminate on the one hand the continual harping on sex in advertisements, newspapers, amusements, books and plays, and allow people to perform their functions with less self-consciousness, and it will soon be found that for many people sex is a great deal of fuss about nothing. The American prohibition of alcoholic beverage made young people at once determined to drink not only more than was good for them, but far more than they wanted: exactly the same effect of prohibition is to be seen universally in our present societies with regard to sexual appetites. It is quite possible, however, that the sexual act may be performed as often as ever, in spite of the fact that the amount of time given to thinking and arguing about it will be infinitely less.

Moreover, if we look further still into the future we can see that once the state exercises a rational control, sexual bimorphism will be replaced by economically conditioned polymorphism as we have seen occur among the social bees, ants and wasps.

Even in our own time it is not difficult to see that

instead of the two recognized sex types, male and female, there are really even among human beings four or five sexual types. In the first place, there are the women who are partially sterile and whose craving for marriage and parenthood is more the result of social suggestion than of the normal stimulus of their endocrine system. At present we see thousands of these mannish, flat-chested, often hirsute individuals encouraged by orthodox opinion to imagine that they are "surplus women" and failures, unless they can persuade a man against his better nature to treat them in a way for which they are not naturally fitted. In the future, society will use scientific knowledge to complete their asexual leanings and to turn them into competent workers not plagued by the existence of unsatisfied and semi-rudimentary desires and organs.

It is only the fact that we have two kinds of dress and no more that makes us think there are just two physical types of human animals, the male and the female. If we invented as many distinctive plumages as there are types of endocrine balances and if, instead of trying to counteract those balances when they deviated from what we consider the only two "normal" types, we used our physiological knowledge to fix them in non-sexual grooves, we should save a great deal of pain and confusion.

And we should pave the way for an acknowledgment that man, as well as all other animals that have become slaves of the social habit, must obey the inexorable law that economic division of labour involves biological polymorphism along suitable lines; that whereas sex types are sufficient for the solitary animal, work types are ultimately inevitable for the social being. When this has become the policy of

## WHITHER HUMAN NATURE ?

social dictatorships in the more remote future, we shall find that :

MANKIND, LIKE THE SOCIAL INSECTS, WILL BE DIVIDED INTO FOUR OR FIVE DIFFERENT SEXUAL TYPES AND WILL FORGET THE HE AND THE SHE IN THE NEEDS OF PHYSIOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL DIVISION OF LABOUR.

### 48

One of the results of the dissociation of the four ideas joined together in current sexual orthodoxy will be that sexual behaviour will no longer be given the exaggerated social importance that it has had hitherto. It seems strange that society has always deliberately interfered so much with so private a matter, until we realize two things : first, that primitive neuroticism about sex has created a deeply rooted superstition that the sexual conduct of individuals, if it offends against ritual purity, may injure the welfare of the social unit itself ; and, second, that sexual conduct is closely connected with the acquisition of property in persons, and however well it may be disguised, property in persons will remain the most important type of property so long as private property exists.

Now soap has come and private property is going ; and if we bear in mind the consequences of these two facts we shall see that society will soon be able to acknowledge the unimportance of interfering with sexual conduct unless it leads to the exploiting of one individual by another. There will be many changes of judgement and of emphasis. The man who does not practise birth control unless he is deliberately prepared as well as able to beget a child of the highest physical and mental standards will be a criminal.

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

Instead of hounding prostitutes from one street to another, society will condemn the man who gives them money, since he is exploiting their economic want for his own purposes. There is no need to waste time kicking the dead horse of our divorce laws ; it is quite clear that with the Age of Stupidity will pass its imbecile legal product, which lays down that, for a couple to be divorced, it must be proved that one or other of the two individuals does not want to be divorced, and that if both parties have committed adultery they must remain joined together in holy matrimony.

But let us turn to other branches of human behaviour which are at least as important as the sexual :

CRIME WILL BE CONSIDERED A DISEASE AFTER  
1985 AND WILL CEASE TO EXIST BY 2000.

Even the most rugged apostle of individualism admits that there are some whims of personal conduct that must be discouraged by society. Indeed, we find that the professional individualists, whose sole aim is to keep up the civil war of man with man within the social structure, are often the most straight-laced about all other conduct except economic licensed banditry. If a man feels that you should be ostracized for wearing a white tie with a dinner jacket, you may be quite sure that he will give his vote to the political party that is most active in maintaining the jungle law of freedom in business.

But if we ask why Jones, Smith and Robinson believe that some act is outrageous and to be punished by imprisonment, you will find that though they agree upon what ought to be done with the delinquent they will differ as to why he is a delinquent. Smith sees his act as an offence against God and

therefore worthy of at least six months' solitary confinement (we may say in passing that there are more Smiths in America than in England, where the distinction between a sin and a crime is fairly well understood) ; Jones thinks that the man has offended against the canons of decency and therefore an example must be made of him ; Robinson feels that since property must be safeguarded the man must be imprisoned to discourage the others.

There are crimes against the person, crimes against property, crimes against the state, crimes of violence, crimes of passion, torts, misdemeanours, felonies and all sorts of other categories ; while punishment is sometimes a deterrent, sometimes a vengeance, sometimes a sort of education. The criminal is a victim, a scapegoat, an invalid, and a brand to be plucked from the burning.

In all this confusion it is not surprising that the idealists who have raised a voice against the viler side of society's dealings with its offenders have very often succeeded in making things worse. The horror of solitary confinement was invented by well-meaning humanitarians to avoid the education in vice and crime that came from the old system of indiscriminate herding. And in our day the sort of humanitarianism that is based upon the individualist outlook has done all that it could to sentimentalize the job of prisons into a sort of sanatorium for the pursuit of moral health.

Now it is perfectly true that it is society that makes the criminal and that we should put society in the dock. It is ridiculous to imprison a starving man who steals a loaf of bread ; it is beyond words degrading to the whole male sex that prostitutes should be hounded about by a set of plain-clothes stool-pigeons ;

it is fantastic to punish a man for "blasphemy" because he cannot clothe his lack of faith in the decent language of a Rationalist Press Association treatise and therefore has to depend on four or five Anglo-Saxon words. All this is not only true, but a platitude; but it does no good hoping to found a reasonable and just criminology on such negative assertions.

The trouble with us in this Age of Stupidity is that we found our practice on a hotchpotch of irreconcilable ideas. The future is going to see these contradictory attitudes given up and a new start made with a new dogma, namely, that a man may do anything at all provided it is not contrary to the good of the community and a man may do nothing at all that is contrary to the good of the community.

Once this dogma is accepted there can no longer be any doubt as to the ethical validity of punishment or of what constitutes a crime. We shall all be like plants bearing leaves and buds, and society will be the gardener who will nip off the leaves and buds which are unnecessary or harmful to the growing of the sort of thing which from his point of view is considered the ideal vegetable.

It is hardly necessary to say that such a prospect will not be universally popular. We are all the products of irrational social systems whose members must break the law quite often if they are to lead a sane existence. I myself have often broken the law of my country; sometimes as a matter of moral principle, sometimes in ignorance, sometimes as a convenience and sometimes from pure selfishness. I need hardly say that I have only been punished when breaking the law for the sake of moral principles—but that is irrelevant to the discussion. We are all law-breakers. And while admitting this, it would be

## WHITHER HUMAN NATURE?

childish to pretend that we wish to continue members of societies where the law is so stupid that we hold it in contempt. There is nothing like a bad law for destroying the sense of respect for Law as an ideal, and communities which insist upon allowing their legal systems to run behind the evolving consciences of their members are handicapping themselves in the struggle for existence. We are not sane if we do not hope for the coming of the reign of reasonable law, for we all wish to survive, and inexorable natural law gives the victory in the struggle for existence to the communities whose man-made law is the most reasonable.

What we all fear is that if crime is to be defined as an offence against the state and if the state is going to be the sole judge of what should be done with us, then we may disagree with the definition, and life may very well become not worth living. That is quite true. Life is not going to be worth living for quite a large number of people during the next twenty years. It would be easy to name a hundred prominent figures who are going to go down to their graves in a very discontented mood ; but we cannot hope that inexorable law will stay its hand to prevent this.

There is going to be a most interesting reshuffle of the actors who play the parts of criminals and of pillars of society. Indeed, the reshuffle has already begun. Already quite orthodox German citizens have had to wake up to a new day when it is a crime to have had a non-Aryan grandmother ; English Quakers have been warned against quoting the Sermon on the Mount to members of His Majesty's forces ; Russians have been forced to regard every one of the acts that are considered virtues by American Chambers of Commerce as almost certain to land him in jail ; mild



Catholic monks in Mexico and Spain, semi-detached from the interests of this world, have found that it is criminal for them to teach children the three Rs ; and finally, attempts have even been made in America to prevent small-town fathers from setting up as bankers and stealing other people's money, until the inevitable crash comes, and to prohibit convicts from using their prison cells as clearing-houses for a drug traffic distributed by carrier pigeon—but nothing much has come of these last experiments as yet.

Everywhere new crimes are coming into existence and old crimes are disappearing ; but in every case we find that the new emphasis is laid on the effect of individual acts upon the economic and political welfare of the community. We have taken our eyes out of their blinkers and no longer pretend that we are trying to safeguard eternal and absolute virtue ; justice has stepped down and social expediency has taken its place.

But when we say this, we are again speaking objectively and from outside. Your Russian jurist does not say that Soviet Justice is a mere social expediency ; he says it is the real justice in distinction from the false justice of the bourgeois. Your German or your Italian may subtitle his peculiar efforts in modernism Roman Justice and Aryan Justice, but he assumes that these things are the real eternal absolute *it* and that all other systems are pale shadows or deliberate impostures. In short, we have reached a time when the relativity of all human ideas has put the Platonist to rout. We know that there will never be any universal definition of the good and the bad until mankind ceases to be divided into warring classes and warring nations. When that happens what will be the attitude towards crime and punishment ?

## WHITHER HUMAN NATURE?

Let it be said at once that this attitude will not be arrived at through the detached thought of a group of humanitarians or expert psychologists or criminologists working at the problem without reference to the way in which their social economic surroundings are developing. Society evolving according to inexorable natural law will tell the criminologists what they are to do about crime, just as it will tell the psychologists what they are to do about the soul, and the humanitarians what they are to do about humanity. We cannot repeat this too often.

When mankind has completed the transition from social units wherein individuals are allowed to carry on civil war with one another to the harm of the state, to units wherein individual action will only be permitted if it does no harm; many acts which are crimes to-day will cease to be crimes, and many acts to-day considered innocent will be heavily punished.

Putting the matter crudely: within a very short number of years a stockbroker and a burglar, who are to-day not on speaking terms, will be rubbing noses in one and the same concentration camp—unless they are skilful enough to change their professions, in which case either or both may be commissars. The keynote in the changing moral emphasis will be a much more rigorous interference with the human love of money, which as Mr. Keynes has said, has been responsible for more human misery than sexual love. Instead of encouraging one human being in his efforts to exploit his neighbour economically, social justice will concentrate on preventing all such exploitation. The criminal will be the economic exploiter, the weakener of the social unit, the man whose actions hamper the social unit in its struggle for existence by

keeping alive a parasitical struggle between individuals within the unit. This is the price man must pay for adopting the social habit as his chief tool in his fundamental task of surviving.

## 49

Abnormal conduct is to be controlled and judged solely from the point of view of its effect on the state ; but that is not all. Even the individual who has no criminal tendencies—always remembering that the definition of a criminal tendency will be very different from what it is now—will not necessarily be allowed simply to “be himself”. The community will use all the mechanism of science to see that there are no square pegs clamouring to be fitted into round holes.

Now the modern psychologist is able to show fairly conclusively that a man chooses his profession in exactly the same way as he chooses his friends, his wife, his hobbies and his religion, namely in order to satisfy and appease a network of jangled cross-purposes often called his “unconscious”. Thus Freudians trace, with some plausibility, the link of cause and effect from certain infantile physical habits, through the building of mud pies to the building of bridges, or cathedrals or whatever it may be ; and they suggest the forgotten scruples about bodily cleanliness that turn into a genius for banking, or gold beating, or coining, or stamp collecting, or ritualism. So long as various schools of psychologists quarrel about the details, we must be content with mere generalizations ; but it is at least clear that the choice of a profession is forced upon a man by internal compunctions closely linked to the idiosyncrasies of his emotional life. A man forced to do a job against his

## WHITHER HUMAN NATURE?

will as we used to say, against his unconscious compunctions as we say to-day, is likely to be a sick man, and therefore from the social point of view an economic liability. Now the struggle for survival will be won by the societies which have fewest individuals who are economic liabilities, and the largest number of positive assets.

It becomes evident therefore that directly an inexorable social control has been established by the coming political changes, the omnipotent social machine will turn its attention to the manufacture of temperaments, of individuals with exactly the emotional make-up which can best be sublimated into the economic activities needed by the community. If it is known that a given emotional make-up depending upon a given endocrine balance makes its owner happy only when functioning in a way not useful to the social unit, then artificial means will at once be taken to upset that balance, and to produce a temperament better suited to social needs.

We can give a simple example of this : most modern psychologists seem agreed that the inordinate interest in business without which capitalism could not have developed so brilliantly is closely associated with what they call anal erotism and the advertisements call faulty elimination. If our economic analysis is correct and capitalism is doomed by the very faults inherent in its nature, then the anal erotic is doomed also ; at least, unless he can find another outlet beside inordinate interest in money transactions. No society can possibly afford to have numbers of individuals suppressing a desire to take part in activities which must be forbidden because they are against the political-economic ideology of the day. "It takes all sorts to make a world" may be a pretty piece of

folk-wisdom, but it has nothing to do with the laws of evolution or a properly organized social habit.

Mr. Aldous Huxley, who has all the restless imagination and thoughtful torment of a frustrated scientist, wrote a book, *Brave New World*, which was three parts sound realistic common sense, and it is interesting to note that orthodox general readers were apt to describe it as "nasty". Its nastiness consists largely in his showing us a society which has abandoned folk-wisdom for the acceptance of the logical consequences of scientific knowledge. In his new world society makes the individuals it needs, instead of doing the best with what unaided nature provides. If he had been willing to show these artificially controlled personalities as a sort of underworld of robots, and had superimposed above them a leisured class of intellectuals free from all scientific control, his picture would have been more popular; his readers, most of whom are evidently destined for the scrapheap, would have been able to identify themselves with this upper caste and would have found the prospect distinctly pleasing. But Mr. Huxley is too good a scientist to paint the future thus. The intellectuals belong to a group that notoriously does not wish to be organized and cannot organize other people. They will come more and more under the control of people who are unable to appreciate their sterling qualities and for several generations we shall see no intellectuals at all, only scientific technicians.

It has been said that if there had been psychoanalysts in his day they would have cured William Blake. In my opinion and in that of my readers this would have been a pity; but we are not representative of the human forces through which evolution will work. We are on the threshold of an age which will

## WHITHER HUMAN NATURE?

not be able to understand the attraction of an imagination that flouts logic and reality ; that age will cure its William Blakes before they can show any symptoms.

We are pleased to divide certain unstable mentalities into different categories. We distinguish, for example, between the lunatic, the lover and the poet ; but the distinction is rather artificial. The busy people who control our evolution are never certain whether a given individual is a lunatic or a poet. True, there are some poets like Eddie Guest in America, or Rudyard Kipling in the British Empire who are evidently not lunatics ; at least from the point of view of the society which produced them ; but most poets who were rash enough to take an interest in practical life would be hurried into an asylum, by some group or other in their community. What would an all-powerful Rotary club, able to sign certificates of insanity, do with a Walt Whitman, with a Sinclair Lewis ? Would a well-governed community alive to the importance of health control allow Coleridge or De Quincey to take opium ? What has happened in all totalitarian states to dissident writers and artists ? All efficiently governed countries find that artists tend to have bad habits and worse politics, and none of them in our day are willing to forgive these for the sake of an occasional masterpiece.

Now, since organized efficiency is clearly going to be the aim of all human communities in the next stage of their evolution, we had better say good-bye to art as we have known it. What will take its place eventually we shall consider later ; for the moment we must admit that the day of the artist as chartered libertine in social matters is over. An Irishman once said that there were three kinds of men : those who longed to rule, those who longed to be ruled and

those who wished neither to rule nor to be ruled, but to be left alone. These last, he said, are the producers of art. Nobody is going to be left alone in the future, and it is good-bye to art if art is dependent upon a man being left alone. But is it ?

50

The reader will have come to the dismal conclusion that our generation looks like being the last before the extinction of the individual. Will this extinction be permanent or temporary ? It will be temporary.

HUMAN BEINGS WILL BECOME STANDARDIZED  
FOR A TIME, BUT EVENTUALLY THE STATE WILL  
ENCOURAGE INDIVIDUALITY AGAIN ALONG CER-  
TAIN CAREFULLY CONTROLLED LINES.

Indeed, the inevitable warfare between the group and the individual that has produced the totalitarian state is due to a false and too early flowering of individualism, which was dangerous to the group and had therefore to be suppressed. Once the sting has been removed from individualism it can be allowed to flourish, since it is a normal requisite of life in all its forms.

When a biological type takes up the social habit it means that the unit which must be made strong to fight the battle for survival is the social unit. Within that unit there can be no civil war. Solitary animals may compete, but one cell must not compete with another within the body of the composite animal, and one individual must not compete with another individual within the group ; such competition would inevitably weaken the unity of the whole. Man is no exception to the working of this law. Ultimately all competition in an economic sphere between one

## WHITHER HUMAN NATURE?

man and another must weaken the efficiency of the community, a fact which becomes immediately apparent when another community enters the struggle free from this weakness.

In capitalist society the only kind of freedom and individualism that really appeals to the average man is freedom to carry on civil war against his fellow man in the economic sphere. In America to-day we are seeing some vociferous championing of a "freedom", menaced, we are told, by the very mild reforms of the New Deal and its successors. If we analyse these cries for freedom we find that they are nothing more than a demand for the perpetuation of chartered brigandage. Freedom for Jones to be a Marxian and for Smith to be a Single Taxer? Freedom for you to like Browning and for me to prefer Walt Whitman? Freedom for Mr. X to bathe naked and for Miss Y not to believe in God? Freedom for workers to organize to get better conditions of labour and for unemployed men to alter the conditions which lead to unemployment? Not in the least; simply freedom for the income-tax dodger to keep dodging, for the employer of sweated labour to continue sweating his workers, for the international banker to unload worthless bonds on the gullible public, freedom for the conservative to stick to every one of his prejudices. That is what the crusaders for freedom in America are after; the very things that weaken the community in its struggle for existence; the rugged individualism which makes of man so poor a practitioner of the art of being a social animal.

Nor is this an American phenomenon: throughout the world to-day reaction demands precisely the sort of freedom that unalterable, inexorable natural law condemns, and in order to get that freedom it is



## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

prepared to sacrifice those forms of freedom which alone give the whole process of evolution any meaning at all. Our prophecies have made it abundantly clear that future history will see this situation reversed : the freedom dear to professionally rugged individualists to batten economically on their fellows will be ruthlessly suppressed, in order that eventually true freedom may exist.

What, then, is true freedom? Not to have silly ideas about the nature of the universe we live in ; not to misuse our minds about reality ; not to make things easier for ourselves by exploiting the work and life-blood of others ; not even to work ourselves to the bone in labours deleterious to the community—all these are the false freedom which inexorable law condemns. True freedom is a man's right to dream his own dreams in the spare time that socially organized labour gives him ; to build his own private world of values ; to decorate crude reality with his own phantasies.

Provided that in the common world of everyday reality he is himself a producer and that he does not exploit the producing power of anyone else, then he will be left free over and above this to be an artist. The price, that the social habit, come into its own, demands, is that every individual gives up his freedom to struggle with his neighbour in the economic world ; and the reward it offers for this self-denial is a greater freedom in the artist's world of dreams. Since capitalism has for its own end made art and creativeness unpopular, this exchange will not appeal to the majority of men whom capitalism has distorted. But mere unpopularity never affects inexorable law.

A man may choose his own medium within the recognized limits of choice ; he may be an artist in

## WHITHER HUMAN NATURE?

the accepted sense of the word ; or an artist in personal relationships ; an artist in physical perfection, or as we usually say, an athlete ; an artist in amusing his fellow creatures—so long as he does not set out to be a founder of a new religion, which is nothing else but subjecting others to the whims of your own imagination ; so long as he does not use his art as a means of propaganda against the decrees of the social unit ; so long as he does not claim of his art a validity in the world of real things ; he will be allowed to dream and to create. Indeed, society ultimately exists for this purpose and no other, to make daily life run so smoothly that no one finds himself crippled in the life of his imagination. Art is not doomed by the coming of a fully developed social habit, it is transformed, purified and saved.

### 51

Just as contemporary society is divided into classes and masses, so there are two divisions of art, the highbrow and the lowbrow, both of them vitiated by our social and economic chaos. We may sufficiently define our two divisions by saying that highbrow art prides itself upon appealing to the favoured few, while lowbrow art is pledged to seduce the pocket of the million. We can safely prophesy the future of highbrow art as we know it :

THE Highbrow art of our day will have  
no future save as a historic curiosity,  
since it has sacrificed everything to a  
misguided individualism.

The highbrow artist frankly claims as a peculiar merit that his work can only be appreciated by the few ; and the fewer there are who can appreciate it,

the better the artist claims to be. Any brother artist who succeeds in catching the general ear is at once counted out ; and eventually we find obscurity regarded as a virtue in itself.

Now it is perfectly true that the enjoyment of art demands a special psychological make-up, and that some people have a far greater thirst for a share in other people's dream world than the rest of mankind. And so the audience interested in works of art will always be much smaller than the total population. Moreover, deep appreciation of art is a matter, not merely of feeling, but of thought and requires a training ; and this will limit the artist's audience. But highbrow art in our time is not concerned with any such limitations as these. It sets its limits according to the dictates of snobbism. It is specifically something that can only be enjoyed by those who have had the education that sets them off from the mass of society. Art and literature must be expensive to be good.

Rubbish ! you say, how can anyone claim that literature is an expensive taste in an age of cheap editions ? It is true that the books can be bought for a few pence, but the preparation needed by the reader if he is to appreciate them, reckoned in hard cash can only be achieved by the leisured classes ; for either the form or the subject-matter will involve a public school education, or a society *salon milieu*, before it can be assimilated.

That this is true of the form is well seen in the case of James Joyce's *Ulysses*, a masterpiece in its way and one of the few books indispensable to any young writer who takes his craft seriously. But what reader can appreciate it who has not had an education that will have cost more in money, or at least

in time, than can be afforded by ninety-nine out of a hundred of the population? It is true that the learning of *Ulysses* is mostly a matter of tags, and the scholarship very much of the same sort as that which created *1066 and All That*; but nevertheless a great deal of the essential force of the book depends on the reader's knowing that the author has a smattering of all sorts of dead and polite knowledge; and it would therefore be merely boring to a sensitive miner or railwayman, to whom Shakespeare or Shelley or Byron might have a great deal to offer. There is no doubt that *Ulysses* will live, the shame as much as the glory of our age. Technically it will give hints to writers in a healthier social epoch; historically it will illustrate how art was cut off by intellectual snobbery from the many, in order that the few might pat themselves on the back.

Or take the other great contemporary masterpiece, by the epic poet of polite boredom, Proust. Here the subject-matter insures that only a small group of economically privileged persons shall really appreciate the art. What possible interest can there be in Proust's characters for the man fighting the battle, and admittedly often the dreary battle, of a worker in an age of dying capitalism? Perhaps Proust is greater than Victor Hugo, than Dostoiefsky, than Dickens, but what will the future think of such genius expended on the vacuum of drawing-room nonentity?

Closed within the magic boundary of the leisured class, fake revolutionary artists are pleased to experiment. Certain that their readers will be too afraid to disclose the secret, Gertrude Stein writes absolutely meaningless books, or D. H. Lawrence plunges into a fake world of psycho-sexual impotence, or the Surrealists produce unintelligible codes for the painting

of pictures with which no one could live for a week in any comfort or peace. But nowhere are the ravages of individualism more apparent than in the arts of the theatre.

Here the pseudo-art of our day gives itself away most completely, for it comes most clearly into contact with its audience, and by its attitude to the audience it stands condemned. There are playwrights, actors, dancers, musicians who will try to persuade you that the artist is more important than the audience, a heresy which whenever it has arisen has pitched all art into a profound decadence.

If you look at the history of the theatre you will find that whenever there has been suitable social conditions to produce an audience, which needed the theatre as an outlet, good drama has always existed. The Greek dramatist, for example, did not think that drama existed that he should publish his personality. He was the servant of an audience that demanded of him co-operation in the expression of a social act. Because the urge to perform this social act was so great and so universally significant to human nature, we to this day find the Greek drama living and valuable. But it was not Sophocles and Euripides primarily who created this still living experience, it was the social condition of the Athens of their time.

Now if we had an audience to-day that needed the theatre as vitally as the Greek audience needed it, we should have as good drama produced in contemporary England as they had in Athens; and if we do not possess such an audience no artist will be able to conjure it together.

It is this absence of an audience that gives a certain type of misguided exhibitionist his opportunity. In every centre of culture you will find to-day the

highbrow dramatist or dancer, for example, lamenting the lack of an audience intelligent enough to appreciate him and apparently demanding that society should subsidize him in some way so that he may express himself. But the artist cannot create his audience; it is the social system that creates the audience, and if an artist feels that in his age there is no one to appreciate him, his only redress is to go about doing his bit to help change the social system that has no use for him. And he will probably find that the way to do this is to help address envelopes, or act as steward at meetings, or sell papers in the street, and not to set about grimly dancing or acting what no one wants to see. The trouble is, of course, that artists are apt to find that envelope-addressing does not give their ego the scope that they need, so that they tire rapidly when given socially valuable work, and, despairing altogether of mankind, fall back on their private little dung-heap clique disgruntled.

Moreover, individualism as a social fetich has encouraged the highbrow artist to consider himself the centre of a new religion. Not content with pleasing his public he is determined to teach; when his art does not go over, he issues manifestoes and tries to argue the audience into enjoying itself. Under individualism the artist of to-day is encouraged to be an exhibitionist; the success or failure of the artist of to-morrow is going to depend upon the extent to which he is prepared to become a servant.

Again, highbrow art persists in making a claim to a fuller knowledge of the universe by special revelation from God. The typical philosophy of the contemporary æsthete is that when a man paints a picture, for example, its merit lies in revealing something more significant than reality; and this doctrine makes of

the artist a superman for whom the rest of society should work. The future of art does not lie in this direction. When man becomes completely socialized he will still need his artists—not to invent new religions nor to discover new truths, but to glorify the state religion, and to serve the sole permissible truth, the truth demanded by the state for its own self-preservation. In this process the distinction between highbrow and lowbrow will go the way of all other class distinctions.

## 52

If what we have called highbrow art is ruined in our day by an individualism that exalts the artist above his audience, what has happened to lowbrow art?

By lowbrow art we mean all artistic expression that frankly appeals to the million.

The individualist intellectual of our day, artist or not, makes a fool of himself whenever he talks about lowbrow art. He insists that the movies, dance music, vaudeville and so on have no merit, and thinks that he founds his judgement on æsthetic criteria. But most criticism, even among artists, is sublimated envy and jealousy, and the highbrow's real quarrel with lowbrow art is that its practitioners make more money than he, and also that he is temperamentally incapable of finding the pleasure that others find in these degraded forms. Byron's real complaint against the waltz was that he was a cripple.

The highbrow critic who jumps down the throat of anyone who even claims to enjoy music without understanding the technical adventures of modern harmony, thinks that he has a perfect right to condemn the music hall out of hand, even though he

## WHITHER HUMAN NATURE?

has no idea at all whether a given act is technically good or bad. He does not understand that the audience at the Holborn Empire applies as ruthless a set of critical standards to an adagio dancer, a female impersonator, a jazz band, a Japanese acrobat or even a dirty skit as he does to the Lerner or the Flonzaley string quartet as interpreters of Beethoven. Because he is not a music-hall addict he is incapable of appreciating the niceties of style and he is therefore critically incompetent.

And yet it is this lowbrow art that is most representative of the future of all art ; for when we take from current art the appeal of snobbism, the restless craving for false escapes from reality—that is, the pseudo-philosophic element in it, the artificial limiting of audience by the use of a jargon only understood by those who have had an expensive education—there is scarcely anything left. Highbrow art is a class product and with classes it will become extinct. And yet lowbrow art is going to be a very different thing in the future from what it is to-day ; for to-day it bears on its face all the pockmarks of production for profit.

Let us consider the Movies. The evolution of tools has at different times exalted and debased the importance of specific media for the expression of art, and in due course this evolution of tools has made the Movies the most important form of art in our time. When society was organized into small compact units, the City State of ancient Greece, everybody was able to get within the sound of one voice, and in consequence the spoken drama was the most important form of art, along with oratory and spoken verse. When in the Middle Ages the society had a rapidly increasing population of illiterate town-dwellers, paint-



ing and sculpture became the most important forms of art ; the great medieval masterpieces of sculpture such as the Portico de Gloria in the cathedral of Santiago de Compostella were simply text-books of catholic dogma prepared for the instruction of pilgrims who could not read. Now that the evolution of tools has produced vast literate populations, pictorial and plastic arts have fallen behind literary arts, and it was not until the most recent advances of technology brought us Wireless and Talkies, that the arts dependent on the spoken voice were able to hold their own once more. The Talkies and very soon Television will be the most important arts of the immediate future ; but they will change fundamentally as time goes on. Their greatest changes will be due to the elimination of the profit motive, and the substitution for it of the motive of state propaganda. The artist at present sells himself to the men who decide what the largest number of people are willing to pay for ; in the future he will be controlled by those whose business it will be to perfect the social habit and to eliminate dangerous forms of individualism. The artist is not going to be free ; but then he never has been free. The great difference is going to be that he is going to be given the chance to work in accordance with the inexorable laws of evolution, instead of, as at present, having to expend his efforts on what is anti-evolutionary and therefore the producer of social extinction. To-day the artist is a merchant of death, quite as surely as the armaments manufacturer is, and to-morrow he will be the merchant of life. Let us justify these very rhetorical phrases.

I once had a conversation with the great soviet film director Eisenstein on the relative freedom of a mar

## WHITHER HUMAN NATURE?

of his trade in the U.S.A. and in Russia. The papers at the time were full of pity for poor Russian artists who were the slaves of propaganda; nobody, said Eisenstein, asked what the artist was a slave to in a capitalist country. In Russia, it is true, the government decides what subject is of the greatest social importance at any given moment, and the film producer will be told to produce a film about it. Instead of indulging in whatever fancy may enter his head, his art must be the servant of the need of the moment.

For example, when the Russian government had to find means of rescuing the countless children who had lost homes and parents in the course of the chaos of revolution, foreign intervention, and famine, film artists were told to produce pictures on this theme; the result was the *Road to Life*, a film which anyone, who knows enough about films as an art medium to judge, will admit to be better than nine-tenths of Hollywood and Elstree.

There is nothing new in this from the artist's point of view. Michael Angelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael certainly did not produce work with religious subjects simply because they were obsessed with catholic dogma; they produced them because they were paid to do so by the particular people who were economically able to be their patrons. Gainsborough, Romney and Sargent were in the same boat in their day, except that they were paid to produce pictures of expensive-looking ladies and children. If Sargent had insisted on painting Virgins he would not have got very far; that he painted the people he did, made his art neither better nor worse. Art depends on those who pay the artist.

Let us compare the slavery of the Russian with that of the American film artist. Is Hollywood free to pro-

duce art? No; everything in Hollywood bows down to "Entertainment Value". In a country that admits that its average intellectual age is twelve years that is bound to be a handicap; for it means that nothing may be produced that would not appeal to an adult body equipped with an arrested brain.

And so once more we see that the reason why the Movies are not better than they are is not because the medium is bad, not because the artists are second-rate, but because the social *milieu* is not such as to produce art of lasting value.

Moreover, the relationship between the state and lowbrow art is such as to emasculate it. If you aim at pleasing the millions so as to make a profit, you must avoid the use of any subject-matter that is likely to displease any large number of them. You must avoid all "controversial" subjects. When Eisenstein was offered a huge sum to go and direct films in Hollywood, he was handed a list of subjects that he must not introduce into any film-story. At the top of the list was "any theme dealing with disputes between capital and labour". In other words the most burning questions of our day are forbidden as subjects of lowbrow art. No theme that referred to race conflicts is permitted, since any such film is bound to lose the chance of reaping adequate profits in the southern states. The other items on the list included everything of major interest in modern life, leaving very little but a discreet use of twin beds.

Compare this slavery to entertainment value with the opportunities of a soviet artist. In Russia the artist finds himself in precisely the same position as he occupied in ancient Athens; he is the interpreter of the common will of his social unit. Is it not significant that only when the artist has occupied this

position does his work live to give pleasure to later ages? Is it not clear that the future of art lies in this direction; that the absurd egoism of our high-brow art and the debased standards of our lowbrow art will both perish, leaving behind for the artist of to-morrow a really pre-eminent and respected position in society; a position which he will gain, not by publishing his own personality, but by interpreting the imaginative experiences of individuals knit together by a satisfying and exalting social habit; by showing the places where individual dreams meet and melt into one?

53

Last of all, what of religion? While the author has been busy with this book he has naturally kept an eye open for former prophetic utterances that might be at variance with his own judgement. Here is a volume published in 1897 and called "Posterity: its verdicts and methods: or, Democracy A.D. 2100". Its author is particularly concerned with religion, and prophesies boldly that, by the date he has chosen, the Church of England will have become all powerful by opening its pulpits to nonconformist preachers. That is surely a slow-motion picture of posterity and its evolution. On the other hand we have those who expect all religion to be court-martialled and shot directly capitalism declines and falls.

It is a peculiarly false reading of history to suppose that the existence of religion is due to a clever conspiracy on the part of vested interests. The fact that there always have been religions for which men have been willing to sacrifice themselves more readily than for any other cause shows that until human nature is completely changed there will be certain

needs that can only be satisfied by religion of some sort or another.

It may not have a childish supernatural element ; it may not be at loggerheads with all knowledge reasonably arrived at ; it may not command obedience by ruthless hierarchies in this world and a system of rewards and punishments in another ; but it will be there. It will be there to satisfy certain individual needs and to safeguard certain social demands.

A cold non-religious picture of life is a mental impossibility except at brief moments in the study of a scientist, whom life is for the moment at least treating particularly well. We may contemplate peacefully the incontrovertible fact that according to the famous second law of thermodynamics everything in the universe must in the long run turn to dust and ashes, and we are in duty bound to accept this, when we are actually concerned with the scientific picture of the universe. But to eat, sleep and rest with that picture and no other is a mental impossibility. We must also have values and overbeliefs, none of which are scientifically valid. For a man to do without religion he must be healthy and attractive physically, he must have expectation of a long life, he must be in love with the right person and the right person must be in love with him, he must be economically secure and a great many hidden things must have gone right with his unconscious experience from infancy up. Otherwise there will be something for which he must compensate in some way or other.

In the future a great deal less will exist in everyday life needing compensation in the world of fantasy because, as we have seen, the evolution of technology will have made personal relationships simpler and more satisfying ; we shall supplement crude reality

by finer loves and friendships. In the second place we shall find a more satisfactory means of compensation in an art purged of its present weaknesses ; an art that does not offer us escapes from reality down debilitating and socially obnoxious paths ; an art which is not concerned in hiding the social injustice upon which its leisured enjoyment depends ; an art which is concerned not with putting up barriers between class and class, but with revealing and underlining the fundamental unity of all human beings. Such an art verges on religion ; for religion is nothing but an artistic experience shared by a group of persons. The future of religion will have many resemblances to its original social form. There once was a time when no distinction existed between religion and politics, between religion and science, between religion and art, between religion and pleasure. It was only when religion began to be used as a weapon of class against class that it lost its universality. What this means we can dimly foresee from observing what is happening to religion in the totalitarian state of to-day. The claim that there cannot be a religion apart from the political and economic organization of the state is true ; even though the countries such as Germany which are putting the idea into practice have incorporated into their neo-religion elements that are anti-evolutionary and therefore bound to lead to disaster. But a religion which is the organized mass feeling of the social unit, with its ritual, its methods of emotional intoxication, its code of honour, its aspirations for the unknowable future, its proofless dogmas, its hierarchy of saints, heroes and martyrs, all this will exist as long as man is an emotional animal. No one who has ever been in a crowd can deny it, least of all those who have experience, sympathetic or other-

wise, of crowds of fascists or communists, the only really religious crowds that can be found in the world to-day. Clearly one of them represents a false religion, but which of them it is can only be decided by considering which has within its dogmas and emotional fantasies obedience to the inexorable laws of nature. When the social unit behaves in the world of reality in accordance with these inexorable laws, and adds to this behaviour a rich religious consciousness in the world of fantasy, where there exist over-beliefs and values that no microscope or test-tube can ever discover—then we have the social unit that is destined to carry through the impending dark ages the lighted torch of evolving humanity.







